NICHOLAS DE LANGE

Japheth in the Tents of Shem

Texts and Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Judaism
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Bahan dengan hak cipta

Japheth in the Tents of Shem

Greek Bible Translations in Byzantine Judaism

by

Nicholas de Lange

In piam memoriam et honorem debitum

Arnaldo Momigliano

(1908–1987)

Henry Chadwick

(1920–2008)

Geza Vermes

(1924–2013)

Evelyne Patlagean

(1932–2008)

. . . Perhaps even the land of the Pyramids never produced a novelty which had a profounder and more enduring influence than the Greek Bible.

H. St J. Thackeray, *The Septuagint and Jewish Worship*, 10.

. . . le philologue, quand il se livre aux deux tâches qui sont au centre de sa vocation : l'édition des textes et le commentaire de ceux-si, y mesure sans cesse ses deux insuffisances : insuffisance de sa propre technique, par rapport à l'ensemble des ces savoirs et ces méthodologies qu'il met en œuvre sans jamais pouvoir espérer les dominer entièrement : codicologie, histoire du livre, paléographie, histoire des théories grammaticales, grammaire historique, théorie linguistique, rhétorique, histoire des doctrines, histoire générale, et d'autres encore ; et insuffisance de sa position ancillaire : car l'éditeur des poètes n'est pas le critique inspiré ; encore moins est-il un poète lui-même ; l'éditeur de textes philosophiques n'est pas le philosophe, ni même le professeur de philosophie . . .

Jean-Pierre Rothschild, *Conférence d'ouverture, École Pratique des Hautes Études, Section des sciences historiques et philologiques, 20 novembre 1996* (Paris, 1998), 15.

Preface

The present work is the fruit of many years' gestation. In many ways it can be attributed to a series of providential accidents.[1] I cannot hope to repay all the many debts of gratitude I have incurred. Rehearsing those to whom I owe special thanks will convey some idea of the history of the project. I apologise to those whose names I may have inadvertently omitted.

I studied Greek and Hebrew from a relatively early age. At Harrow County School for Boys I received a classical education of a sort that hardly exists today. Among several devoted teachers I should single out for special mention the late Kenneth Waller. I am deeply grateful too to 'my rabbi', the late Ignaz Maybaum, for instilling the rudiments of Hebrew grammar in me week by week and for insisting that I apply myself to Greek when I was under some pressure to concentrate on modern languages.

I read Classical Mods and Greats at Christ Church, Oxford, and I concurrently studied rabbinics at Leo Baeck College, a rabbinic seminary in London. (I did not realise at the time that this combination – classics and rabbinics, university and seminary – was usual in the 19th-century heyday of the *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* movement.) In retrospect I have to acknowledge a special debt of gratitude to two teachers in particular for saving me from a possible feeling of split personality. My Greek history tutor at Christ Church, the late David Lewis, while teaching me about Athens in the 5th century BC, revealed a strong interest in Jewish history and literature in the ancient world. My rabbinic Hebrew teacher at Leo Baeck, the late Raphael Loewe, had had a classical education himself and was ever alert to the interplay of Greek and rabbinic culture. In addition, Cecil Roth, whose lectures I attended, imbued me with a lasting interest in Jewish history.

It might seem natural, given this background, that I should have opted to write a doctoral thesis on a Greek author who had a strong interest in Judaism, but in fact it was not my idea. Henry Chadwick suggested to me that I should study Origen and his relations with the Jews, and it was under his guidance that I brought together these two sides of my scholarly training. A key element in that topic is Origen's work as a biblical scholar, and particularly his edition of the Greek Old Testament with reference to the Hebrew

[1] I consider this phrase, selected by my teacher Geza Vermes as the title of his autobiography, particularly well suited too to my own trajectory.

and to various Jewish revisions and interpretations. That thesis was the seed out of which the present study eventually grew.

I received considerable encouragement at that time from Arnaldo Momigliano and Geza Vermes. Both these mentors, in different ways, were engaged in a similar quest to reconcile Judaism and Hellenism.

After I moved to Cambridge to teach rabbinic Hebrew in 1971 I discovered the Cairo Genizah, and among the mainly Semitic Genizah fragments I was naturally drawn towards the tiny minority that are in Greek, or more often a mixture of Greek and Hebrew. The first of these that I prepared for publication, a bilingual glossary, turned out to have some striking affinities with the preserved fragments of Akylas's translation. When I pointed this out to the then Regius Professor of Hebrew, John Emerton, he responded with enthusiasm and offered to publish my article in *Vetus Testamentum*, of which he was editor. I am deeply grateful to him for thus setting me on the long road towards this book. A couple of years later, in 1982, he published my editions of two more fragments, from another glossary and a translation, in a book he was co-editing (a Festschrift for our colleague Erwin Rosenthal). By now I was reading my way systematically through the Genizah collections, in Cambridge and elsewhere, and eventually, in 1996, I published a volume of Greek and Hebrew Genizah fragments, of which several related to the Bible, in the form of translation, glossary or commentary. All these fragments testify to the Jewish use of Greek Bible translations in the Middle Ages, and they constitute the nucleus of this book.

In September 1973 I attended the first international colloquium on Origen, in the monastery of Montserrat in Catalonia. There I met Marguerite Harl, together with her '*équipe*', which included Monique Alexandre, Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluec. This was the beginning of a deep friendship and a long and fruitful collaboration. Marguerite Harl and I published together a volume of Origen's writings on the subject of the Bible, and I came to be closely involved, from the outset, in the French Septuagint project, 'La Bible d'Alexandrie'. During this time I benefited greatly from the sympathetic interest and the erudition of the late Alexander Scheiber in Budapest, the late Evelyne Patlagean, Colette Sirat, Francis Schmidt and Joseph Mélèze-Modrzejewski in Paris, Natalio Fernández Marcos in Madrid, and Malachi Beit-Arié in Jerusalem.

In 1987 I decided to publish a regular information bulletin about research, publication and other activities in the area of Greek Jewish studies, as the scholarship in this subject seemed to me too dispersed and lacking in contact and coherence. The *Bulletin of Judaeo-Greek Studies* appeared twice-yearly for twenty-two years. I could not have compiled, printed and distributed the *Bulletin* without the participation of Judith Humphrey, whose death in September 1996 was a terrible blow. Judith possessed the requisite linguistic and

computing skills, but beyond that she was an unfailing source of practical wisdom, good humour and encouragement, and a gift for building the most improbable networks.

Over the past thirty years I have spoken about aspects of the subject at local, national and international gatherings too numerous to list here, beginning with the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem in 1985. All these occasions enriched my reflections by valuable exchanges with other scholars. I should mention particularly in this regard two series of four seminars each at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris, in February and March 2000 and March and April 2006, a Visiting Fellowship at the Center for Hellenic Studies, Princeton University, from December 2004 to February 2005, a conference on 'Christians and Jews in Byzantium, from polemics to cultural dynamics' at the Scholion Center, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, in May 2006, and a Dumbarton Oaks symposium on 'The Old Testament in Byzantium' held at the Freer Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C., in December 2006. My contributions to the last two meetings were published in the proceedings, and I am grateful to the organisers for offering me these opportunities to clarify my thoughts, as I am also grateful for the invitation to contribute a chapter on the Jewish tradition of Greek translations to the second volume of the *New Cambridge history of the Bible*, edited by Richard Marsden and Ann Matter.

From June 2006 to May 2009 I directed a research project, 'The Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism', based in the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. With the participation of two postdoctoral associates, Cameron Boyd-Taylor and Julia Krivoruchko, and with technical assistance from the Centre for Computing and the Humanities (now the Department of Digital Humanities) at King's College London, this project resulted in the collection and publication of the fragments, from the Genizah and elsewhere, in a searchable digital corpus (available on line at gbbj.org). The project also held a series of colloquia and a conference at which specialists in a number of areas came together to exchange ideas, and to tackle some of the difficult problems associated with the interpretation of the material. It was in the framework of the project that the present volume was conceived.

In February 2014 and March 2015 I delivered a series of six Grinfield Lectures on the Septuagint at Oxford. I am grateful to Alison Salvesen, Martin Goodman and Hugh Williamson for their part in organizing these and related events, and to those who took part in the discussions, notably Sebastian Brock, Averil Cameron, Gillian Clark, Jan Joosten, Peter Mackridge, Fergus Millar and Tessa Rajak.

Palaeography has played a large part in my work, and I am fortunate to have been able to work closely with Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, who has shown unstinting generosity in placing her knowledge of Hebrew manuscripts

at my disposal. For Greek palaeography I have benefited from my collaboration with Natalie Tchernetska.

My Cambridge colleagues William Horbury, James Carleton Paget and James Aitken have accompanied this work at every turn, providing encouragement and friendly criticism. The Faculty of Divinity at Cambridge could not have been a more supportive setting in which to pursue this research. Cambridge also provided the support of specialists in adjacent disciplines, notably Joyce Reynolds for epigraphy, David Holton for medieval Greek language, and Ben Outhwaite for the Cairo Genizah manuscripts.

In lexicographical matters I have been fortunate to be able to draw on the skills of Shifra Sznol and, through her, on the records of the Historical Dictionary of the Hebrew Language in Jerusalem.

In the final stages of the preparation of this book I have been enormously helped by the grant of a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship. Among other things, the Fellowship enabled me to secure the services of Max Kramer as an editorial assistant, without which the book would probably never have seen the light of day. Max went beyond the role of an assistant, in challenging and strengthening my arguments. I was also fortunate to be able to count on the editorial help of my pupil Martin Borýsek, and the indexing skills of Wendy Baskett.

Peter Schäfer has been a source of unfailing friendly encouragement over the years, and I am particularly grateful to him for agreeing to publish this book, as well as its two predecessors, in series that he co-edited at Mohr Siebeck.

To the staff at Mohr Siebeck I must extend my heartfelt appreciation and thanks, and particularly to Dr Henning Ziebritzki, who has accompanied this project for nearly a quarter of a century.

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List of abbreviations

AJS	Association for Jewish Studies
Ak.	Akylas
BJGS	*Bulletin of Judaeo-Greek Studies*
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library*
BZ	*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CC	*Corpus Christianorum*
C.J.	Codex Justinianus
C.Th.	Codex Theodosianus
CSEL	*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (99 vols, Vienna, Salzburg, 1865–)
DBSup	*Dictionnaire de la Bible, Suppléments* (Paris, 1928–)
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
ET	English translation
GJT	De Lange, N., *Greek Jewish Texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Tübingen, 1996)
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
IJO	David Noy, Alexander Panayotov and Hanswulf Bloedhorn (vol. 1); Walter Ameling (vol. 2); David Noy and Hanswulf Bloedhorn (vol. 3) (eds), *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis* (3 vols, Tübingen, 2004)
JIWE	David Noy (ed.), *Jewish inscriptions of Western Europe* (2 vols, Cambridge, 1993–5)
JAB	*Journal for the Aramaic Bible*
JBE	Starr, Joshua, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire, 641–1204* (Athens, 1939)
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JTS NS	*Jewish Theological Studies*, New Series
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JQR NS	*Jewish Quarterly Review*, New Series
JSIJ	*Jewish Studies, an Internet Journal*
JSQ	*Jewish Studies Quarterly*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
LXX	Septuagint
MGWJ	*Monatsschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums*
MT	Masoretic Text (of the Hebrew Bible)
PAAJR	*Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*
RB	*Revue biblique*
REG	*Revue des études grecques*
REJ	*Revue des études juives*

RHT	*Revue d'histoire des textes*
SRHJ	Baron, S. W., *A social and religious history of the Jews* (18 vols, New York, 1952–83).
Sym.	Symmachos
Th.	Theodotion
TM	*Travaux et Mémoires*
ZDPV	*Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

'MANUSCRIPT', in small capitals, followed by a number refers to the list of manuscripts in Appendix 1, where details of the manuscript in question can be found.

Introduction

The Traditional Scenario

Until recently all introductory books on the Old or New Testament or the history of Judaism were silent about my subject, the medieval Jewish reception and transmission of Greek Bible translations. But they did have a narrative about the ancient beginnings. The following story, which I shall call the 'traditional scenario', was generally agreed:

In Ptolemaic Egypt, and perhaps elsewhere, the Hebrew scriptures, beginning with the Five Books of Moses, were translated into Greek, by Jews for Jews. These translations became the cornerstone of a rich Jewish literature in Greek, exemplified by the allegorical exegesis of Philo of Alexandria or the retelling of biblical history in Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities*. As Jews in the diaspora lost the ability to read Hebrew the Greek scriptures became the nucleus of Jewish worship and study in the *proseuchai* or synagogues. They also played a key role in the dissemination of early Christianity. Some time in the generation or two after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple by the Romans in AD 70, they were abandoned by the Jews.

There was universal agreement that the main reason for this decision was the use of the old translations by Christian apologists in their attacks on Judaism. Some authors adduced other additional reasons: the translations were increasingly out of touch with new developments in rabbinic exegesis; moreover they were based on a different Hebrew text from the one that had been officially adopted in Judaism.

Consequently the Rabbis commissioned a new translation, early in the 2nd century, from a proselyte to Judaism named Akylas.[1]

This scenario is too well-known to detain us for long. Here are a few illustrations, from some of the most authoritative works:

1. William Robertson Smith (1846–1894) lays it out succinctly in his lectures on *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church* (1881):

[1] This is the way his name is written in both Greek and rabbinic sources, and hence is the form I shall use in this book. In Latin sources he is called Aquila. Both names refer to the same person and the same translation.

The Bible of the Greek-speaking Jews, the Septuagint, had formerly enjoyed very great honour even in Palestine, and is most respectfully spoken of by the ancient Palestinian tradition; but it did not suit the newer school of interpretation, it did not correspond with the received text, and was not literal enough to fit the new methods of Rabbinic interpretation, while the Christians, on the contrary, found it a convenient instrument in their discussions with the Jews. Therefore it fell into disrepute, and early in the second century, just at the time when, as we have seen, the new text of the Old Testament had been fixed, we find its use superseded among the Greek-speaking Jews by a new translation, slavishly literal in character, made by a Jewish proselyte of the name of Aquila, who was a disciple of the Rabbi Akiba, and studiously followed his exegetical methods. (76)

2. Emil Schürer (1844–1910), in his *History of the Jewish people in the time of Jesus Christ*, here in Miss Sophia Taylor's English translation (1898):

With Philo the text of the Septuagint is so far a sacred text, that he argues from its casual details, nay, not only did this translation universally penetrate into private use, but it was also used as Holy Scripture in the synagogue service. It was then transferred from the hands of the Jews to the Christian Church and regarded by it as the authentic text of Scripture. But the very circumstance of the Christian Church taking possession of this translation and deriving thence its polemical weapons in its conflict with the Jews, gradually co-operated in bringing the Septuagint into discredit with them and in giving rise to new Jewish translations, especially that of Aquila. . . . (163–4)

3. Henry Barclay Swete (1835–1917), in his *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (1900), follows Robertson Smith and even at one point quotes him verbatim, but is also influenced by Schürer:

When the Lxx. passed into the hands of the Church and was used in controversy with Jewish antagonists, the Jews not unnaturally began to doubt the accuracy of the Alexandrian version. . . . But the dissatisfaction with which the Lxx. was regarded by the Jewish leaders of the second century was perhaps not altogether due to polemical causes. The Lxx. "did not suit the newer school of [Jewish] interpretation, it did not correspond with the received text." Attempts were made to provide something better for Greek-speaking Israelites. . . . (30)

Substantially the same story is told in much more recent works. For example Salo Wittmayer Baron (1895–1989), in *A social and religious history of the Jews* (vol. 2, 2nd ed., 1952), after speaking of rabbinic hostility to Greek culture from the second century on, turns to the biblical translations:

Against the Septuagint, the traditional Greek version, which by its numerous messianic implications and its deep roots in Hellenistic Jewry had served as an eminent vehicle of Christian propaganda, hostility was even sharper. Originally, to be sure, the Greek translators seem to have been in close contact with the contemporary developments of Palestinian hermeneutics. . . . The accelerated pace of reinterpretation, however, in the schools of Hillel and Shammai, and the new adjustments made necessary by the loss of state and sanctuary, left it far behind in the evolution of Jewish biblical learning. It completely outlived its usefulness to Jews when Christians started quoting it as a canonical

authority, even where, in Jewish opinion, it was clearly at variance with the Hebrew text. . . .

Unable, however, to check the use of a Greek version in both home and synagogue, the rabbis of the generation following the destruction encouraged Aquila, the proselyte, to undertake a new, more literal, translation. (142–3)

It hardly needs to be pointed out that beneath the Christian elaboration of this classic scenario there is a theological undercurrent. This is less true of my first witness, Robertson Smith. The context of the passage I have quoted from *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church* is the fixing of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament by the Rabbis, and the replacement of the previously existing variety of texts by a single text resembling what later became the Masoretic Text. This is an historical argument. But when Schürer speaks of the LXX being 'transferred from the hands of the Jews to the Christian Church', echoed by Swete's 'When the Lxx. passed into the hands of the Church', their framework is a theological view of salvation history according to which the revelation formerly vouchsafed to the Jews was taken from them and given to the Christians.

There is another aspect of this story that deserves our attention. For Baron as for Robertson Smith, the abandonment of the LXX is linked to the rise to power of the Rabbis, who sponsored the new translation of Akylas, better able to convey to Greek-speakers the elaborate system of exegesis that they were developing, based on the Hebrew text. Neither author specifically lays at the Rabbis' door the responsibility for suppressing the Septuagint, but both convey the impression that it was a rabbinic decision.

What none of the authors I have singled out for mention, or their contemporaries, explains is what happened to the Greek translations in Judaism after the time of the early Rabbis and Christian Fathers. Some of them mention that Origen, in the third century, had a high opinion of Akylas's translation, and that he states, in his letter to Julius Africanus (§4), that Jews who do not know Hebrew prefer to use it, considering it the most successful of all the translations. Akylas is referred to by the Rabbis, who quote some of his renderings (as they do from the Septuagint). In the middle of the 6th century Justinian's Novel 146 encourages the Jews to use the Septuagint in synagogue readings, but also permits Akylas – presumably because of the aforementioned preference. And a late rabbinic text (*Soferim* 1.7, probably not earlier than the 8th century) likens the day on which the Septuagint was translated to the day on which the golden calf was made. We even read, again in a late text (*Ta'anit*), of an annual fast-day on the day the translation was completed. But that is all we are told about the use of Greek Bible translations in the synagogue.[2] While that may not be surprising in the case of scholars like Robertson Smith or Schürer, who are exclusively concerned with the ancient

[2] See further Smelik, *Rabbis, Language and Translation.*

period, it is striking that Swete's *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, which insists on the place of the LXX in the Christian Church and its influence on Christian theology and liturgy, has virtually nothing to say about the Greek Old Testament in Judaism. As for Baron, whose subject is Judaism down the ages, in his chapter on the Bible in medieval Judaism he includes extensive discussions of various Aramaic and Arabic translations, and even speculates about Persian and Latin ones, but has not a word on Greek translations.

This, then, is the gap that I propose, however inadequately, to address in this book.

New light on the traditional scenario

Before moving on to the Middle Ages, I must dwell a little longer on the ancient period, because our understanding of the ancient foundations critically affects our view of what comes later. A good deal of new light has been shed on different aspects of the traditional scenario I have been describing.

In the first place, the scenario tends to take for granted a model of early Christian-Jewish relations that can be conveniently termed 'the parting of the ways'. This is the title of one of the chapters in James Parkes's classic book, based on his Oxford DPhil thesis, *The conflict of the Church and the Synagogue* (1934). Parkes suggested that by the end of the first century Christianity had emerged as a separate religion, and he subscribed to an established view that the rabbinic authorities assembled in council at Yavneh or Jamnia formally excommunicated the Jewish Christians and instituted a malediction against them into the synagogue liturgy.

This is too large a question for me to do justice to here. Let me just say that I do not think that, in the light of subsequent research, it is possible to maintain this thesis today. I do not know any reputable authority that still believes in the 'Council of Jamnia', or indeed that the Rabbis had the power at the end of the first century, or even much later, to impose their will on the whole of Jewry. I have argued elsewhere that the institution of a malediction of the Christian Church belongs to a much later period, after the Church became identified with the Roman empire. Consequently I do not see that there is any scope today for thinking in terms of a formal and effective condemnation by the Rabbis of the Septuagint translation. As Parkes himself was aware, Origen in the third century and John Chrysostom in the fourth criticised Christians who attended synagogues to imbibe the teachings dispensed there. Neither of these Fathers hints that there might be any practical barrier to a Christian following the scriptural reading or arguments based on it.

On the other hand, Robertson Smith's understanding of a move from a previous variety of Hebrew biblical texts in the late Second Temple period to

a uniform adoption of a proto-Masoretic text under the authority of Scribes and Rabbis has stood the test of time, and indeed the discoveries in the Judaean Desert have strikingly confirmed the earlier variety of Hebrew texts. At the same time, Greek biblical manuscripts discovered both in the Judaean Desert and in Egypt have demonstrated the fluidity of the Greek text too. Manuscripts that clearly belong to the Septuagint tradition contain significant textual variants.

Most important of all, the manuscript of the Greek Minor Prophets from Nahal Hever, which has been dated on palaeographical grounds by Peter Parsons to the latter part of the last century BC, is agreed to represent an attempt to revise the Septuagint in the direction of the proto-Masoretic text type.[3] It is hard to believe that this is an isolated case; more likely it was part of a wider trend. This was certainly the view of Dominique Barthélemy, who, on the basis of specific features of the revision, identified a cluster of extant Greek texts as belonging to this tendency. The feature that has given the cluster of texts a name, first suggested by Barthélemy, is the translation of the Hebrew *gam*, 'also', by *kaige*.

Barthélemy's book *Les devanciers d'Aquila* (1963) was the starting point of what has been called 'a Copernican revolution' in the study of the Greek Old Testament.[4] From our point of view, its achievement is the discovery, not seriously challenged in its broad outlines, that, far from being a brand-new translation or revision, Akylas is a link in a chain that goes back several generations, to a time before the developments in rabbinic exegesis with which Akylas has been associated. I shall try to show that this chain also continued for many centuries after Akylas.

So far I have not paid much attention to the geographical setting. We know, from Philo and other Greek Jewish authors as well as from papyri, that the Septuagint Pentateuch, at least, was well known and had authoritative status in Egypt. It is generally accepted that it, as well as the prophetic books which were translated later, originated there. This happens to be by far the best-documented part of the Jewish Diaspora, and we know very little about what kinds of Greek translations were used in Antioch, Asia, and other parts of the Diaspora. The *kaige* texts, on the other hand, all seem to belong to Palestine.

Akylas's translation, so far as we can tell from the fragments that survive, was very close in its techniques of translation to the *kaige* tradition. There is no reason to doubt that, like the *kaige* revisions and some new translations (Lamentations, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Ruth) it was made and circulated in Palestine.

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[3] Tov, *The Greek minor Prophets Scroll from Nahal Hever*, 25–6.

[4] Bogaert, 'Les études sur la Septante', 175.

Palestine is also the area where Rabbinic Judaism developed. The precise relationship between the *kaige* texts and Rabbinic Judaism has not yet been properly explored, and we probably lack the means to elucidate it in detail. The traditional scenario associates Akylas with the Rabbis, mainly on the basis of texts in the much later Palestinian Talmud in which Rabbis of the early second century are said to have praised his translation, and which could be taken as implying that they commissioned it. There may well be an element of truth in this, although it is something of a leap to suggest that their purpose was to eradicate the use of the Septuagint from synagogues.

Let us be clear that the traditional scenario does not relate the supposed abandonment of the Septuagint to a claim that the Jews abandoned Greek in favour of Hebrew. On the contrary, Akylas's translation was said to be intended for Greek-speaking Jews. This is stated specifically by Robertson Smith (76), and we may recall the words of Origen, 'Jews who do not know Hebrew are particularly given to using it' (ᾧ μάλιστα εἰώθασιν οἱ ἀγνοοῦντες τὴν Ἑβραίων διάλεκτον χρῆσθαι).[5]

The persistence of Greek-speaking Judaism long after the time of Origen was a point made forcefully by Marcel Simon in his ground-breaking book *Verus Israel*.[6] In Simon's view, however, although the use of Greek Bible translations was still a living issue in the sixth century, from that time on there was a withdrawal from Greek culture. 'Judaism became more rigidly devoted to meditation exclusively on the law, and to the practice of its ancient rituals. This was the point at which the divorce from Greco-Roman civilization became absolute.'[7] This view, now widely held, requires modification, however, not least in the light of the evidence presented in this book.

Aim of the present book

My aim in the present book is, firstly, to demonstrate that Greek-speaking Jews continued to use Greek translations long after the early rabbinic and patristic times. In fact, the practice has a documented unbroken history from Ptolemaic Egypt to the present. This study, however, focuses on the period of the Byzantine empire, that is from the fourth century to the fifteenth. Byzantium is a convenient reference-point, but I have allowed myself a certain latitude, both geographically and chronologically. Greek-speaking Judaism has never been limited to a single political entity. As we shall see, there were Greek-speaking Jews in Egypt in the Middle Ages, and in the Byzantine territories that came under Latin domination after the Fourth Crusade, at the be-

[5] Origen, *Letter to Africanus,* 4.
[6] Simon, *Verus Israel*, esp. 344–51 (ET, 296–301) .
[7] Simon, *Verus Israel*, 350 (ET, 301).

ginning of the thirteenth century, Greek continued to be the language of most Jews and they retained strong ties with Byzantium. The end of the Byzantine empire is conventionally dated to 1453, the date of the conquest of the capital, Constantinople, by the Ottoman Turks under Sultan Mehmet II, but for our purposes a more realistic date is 1492, when large numbers of Jews from Spain began to arrive in the former Byzantine territories, and the character of Judaism there was changed for ever. Soon afterwards, the Hebrew printing press was introduced, and Hebrew printing was mainly in the hands of Spaniards and other westerners. The period covered by this book is, therefore, an age of manuscript, and the book is grounded in the close study of manuscripts.

A second aim of the book is to set these manuscripts against their historical background in the Judaism of these territories, which is not very familiar, even to many students of Jewish history.

Thirdly, I wish to study, so far as possible, the character of the translations used by the Jews. On the basis of this study I shall argue that there is a striking and important continuity in the translations. This continuity, of language, style, exegesis and even wording, makes it reasonable to speak of a tradition, not merely in the sense of a continuous practice, but in the specific sense of an unfolding sequence of actual translations, each one developing from its predecessors. I hope to demonstrate that this tradition can be traced back ultimately to the Septuagint, Akylas, and the other ancient translations.

Finally, I want to explore some of the wider implications of these discoveries for our understanding of the nature of Byzantine Judaism, and the relations between Jews and Christians in Byzantium, as well as between Byzantine Jews and those in other countries.

I have deliberately limited the scope of the investigation to conclusions that I believe are well founded. In an area which has been too much exposed at times to speculative and insecure generalisations, I have tried to stay close to the evidence, and avoid letting my imagination take flight, however tempting this may have been. I leave it to others to push the evidence beyond the limits I have set myself.

Structure of the book

Three preliminary chapters set the scene, in different ways, for the main body of the investigation. The first of these sets out the history of research and the new discoveries of manuscripts on which this study is based. The second introduces the history and culture of Byzantine Jewry. The third briefly presents the ancient Greek translations of the biblical books, from the beginnings to the third century and the eve of the Christianisation of the Roman empire.

The next four chapters constitute the core of the book. The chronological span of the study, from the fourth to the fifteenth century, is divided into four periods. Each chapter begins with a brief historical introduction, and continues with a study of the evidence for Jewish use of Greek biblical translations in the respective period.

Chapter Four is concerned with the early Byzantine period, down to the seventh century. During this period Palestine, together with Syria and Egypt, formed part of the empire, before they were all conquered by the Arabs in the 630s. Attention is therefore paid to the nature and life of the synagogue in Palestine and elsewhere, and particularly to the public readings from the scriptures. A key witness concerning these readings is a Roman legal text, a declaration issued by emperor Justinian I on 8 February 553. This document testifies to a deep rift between Jews who support a reading in Greek and those who favour a reading in Hebrew. It affords us, I suggest, a unique insight into the arguments deployed by those Jews who wished to defend the traditional reading in Greek against those (probably representing Rabbinic Judaism) attempting to introduce a reading in Hebrew. The emperor insists that the scriptures must be read in Greek, so that the people may understand, but permits the use of Akylas, the translation favoured by the Rabbinic party. We then investigate whether any actual Greek biblical manuscript fragments survive from the early Byzantine synagogue. Special attention is focused on two manuscripts representing the translation of Akylas, which are probably Jewish, although this cannot be proved with absolute certainty.

Chapter Five is devoted to the most obscure period in Judaeo-Byzantine history, the seventh to tenth centuries. We have hardly any sources to illuminate the darkness. All the more interest, therefore, attaches to a scrap of parchment bearing a fragment of a glossary, giving biblical Hebrew words with their Greek translations. This fragment represents, in a sense, the transition from Greek to Hebrew as the high cultural language of the Jews in the empire: the Greek words are written in Greek letters, but the whole manuscript reads from right to left, i.e. it is a Hebrew book. Yet Greek is still important, and the influence of Akylas on the translations is very strong.

Chapter Six addresses the period from the late tenth to the beginning of the thirteenth century, a period for which we are fortunate to have a number of manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah, as well as other sources. These enable us to trace the use of Greek translations in some detail, although many questions remain. This is a period marked by conflict between Karaites and Rabbanites, yet it is clear that both groups make use of Greek translations. There is also some interesting evidence of the Jewish translations crossing over into Christian manuscripts. Once again we can discern the influence of Akylas and the other ancient translations.

The last period takes us from the Fourth Crusade to the end of Byzantine Jewry in the fifteenth century. It becomes clear that, despite the dominance of

Hebrew in the synagogue, the Greek translations hold their own after the dismemberment of the empire by the Latin conquerors. We witness, for example, the survival of an ancient custom of reading the Book of Jonah in synagogues in Crete under Venetian rule. We also consider the most extensive surviving translation, a rendering of the entire Pentateuch into Greek, which although found in a later printed book indubitably represents the medieval tradition.

The final chapter draws some general conclusions. The most striking thing about the tradition of Greek translation, apart from its persistence down the centuries, is the strong influence of ancient translations, not only Akylas but also the Septuagint and other translations. The survival of elements from ancient Greek-speaking Judaism raises an important question about Byzantine Judaism: is it limited to biblical translations, or are there other ways in which the ancient 'Hellenist' faction succeeded in stamping the culture of later generations of Greek-speaking Jews? The use of Greek translations may also potentially have something to say about relations between Jews and Christians in Byzantium.

Two appendices bring up the rear. The first lists the manuscript sources that provide most of the evidence for the enquiry, with short descriptions and bibliographies. The second is an inventory of later manuscripts and printed works containing translations in the same tradition, tracing the tradition down to the end of the nineteenth century.

Part 1

Preliminaries

Chapter 1

Sources and studies

Early studies

Very little interest was taken in any aspect of our subject before the latter part of the nineteenth century. At that time a number of developments impacted on our subject: the beginning of the rigorous study of Jewish history in the so-called *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* movement, the birth of Modern Greek philology and of Byzantine history, and a renewed interest in early Christian manuscripts.

The *Wissenschaft des Judenthums* movement inaugurated a new era in Jewish studies. As the Jewish scholars tended to have a classical as well as a Hebraic education several of them took an interest in Greek-speaking Judaism. The advent of Byzantine studies as a separate discipline (which may be conveniently dated to the foundation of the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* by Karl Krumbacher in 1892) encouraged a few of them to venture into the new field. In the second issue of the *Zeitschrift* (1893) Joseph Perles, the rabbi of Munich, who was a graduate of the Breslau Rabbinic Seminary (a key institution for the development of Jewish studies) as well as Breslau University, published a pioneering essay entitled 'Jüdisch-byzantinische Beziehungen'.[1] This article was an early precursor of the first book-length study on the subject, Samuel Krauss's *Studien zur byzantinisch-jüdischen Geschichte* (1914). Krauss, who had studied at the Budapest Rabbinic Seminary and later at the Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums (Berlin) and at the universities of Berlin and Giessen, had a strong interest in the Greek language. His doctoral dissertation (Giessen, 1893) had been on Jewish sources for Greek and Latin lexicography, and he subsequently published a monumental dictionary, *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter in Talmud, Midrasch und Targum* (2 vols, Berlin 1898–9). In the *Studien* he devotes a chapter to the Greek language, in the course of which he briefly mentions some biblical translations: a Greek Pentateuch printed in Constantinople in 1547, a Greek translation of Jonah, and another of Job.

[1] Perles, whose Ph.D. dissertation (Breslau, 1859) was on the Syriac Bible, had previously published an article of Byzantine interest: 'Thron und Circus'. The *BZ* article was his last work, before his untimely death at the age of 57 in 1893. There is a fine appreciation of Perles by Wilhelm Bacher in *JQR* 7 (1984–5), 1–23.

Since this brings us to the heart of our present concern we should look more closely at these.

The Constantinople Pentateuch, a polyglot edition containing the Hebrew text, Aramaic targum of Onkelos, and two further translations, in Spanish and Greek, as well as Rashi's commentary, all in Hebrew characters, was printed by Eliezer Soncino, a member of an important Italian family of Jewish printers. It has always been a rare book. A number of authors mention it in the course of the 17th and 18th centuries (Johannes Buxtorf, John Selden, Richard Simon, Shabbetai ben Joseph Bass, Humphrey Hody, Jacques Le Long and Andreas Gottlieb Masch). The Hamburg Hebraist Johann Christoph Wolf returns to it several times in the successive volumes of his *Bibliotheca Hebraea* (1715–33); in the fourth and last volume he copies the first three chapters of Genesis and some verses of Genesis 49 in Hebrew characters.[2] The eminent Hellenist Émile Legrand included a description of it in volume two of his *Bibliographie hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés en grec par des grecs aux XV^e^ et XVI^e^ siècles* (1885), stating that this was the first translation of any part of the Scriptures into vulgar Greek to be printed.[3] He, too, transcribed the opening verses of Genesis. In 1890, at Legrand's suggestion, Lazare Belléli, a philologist from Corfu who was living in Leghorn, went to Paris to study a copy of the translation. He published two articles about it, one in the young *Revue des études grecques* on the Greek language of the translation, and a more general description in the *Revue des études juives*.[4] The former includes a transcription, with notes, of the first four chapters of Genesis. In the latter he points out that the translation is the work of Rabbanites, not Karaites, as had sometimes been asserted, and gives it as his opinion that it was read publicly in the synagogue (perhaps in special Sabbath gatherings) with an educational aim. He had been told that in western Greece it was still used (even though the language seemed outmoded and outlandish), demonstrating the authority it enjoyed.

In 1897 the Dutch Hellenist D. C. Hesseling published the first complete transcription of the Pentateuch into Greek characters, together with an extensive study of its language and a glossary.[5] Belléli, who had been hoping to find funding to produce his own edition, wrote a critical review of this im-

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[2] *Bibliotheca Hebraea*, vol. 4, 1219–26. In vol. 3 he had given the first six verses of Genesis in Greek and Spanish, both in Hebrew characters and in transliteration. There are other references to the book in vol. 2, 355, 440–8.

[3] Legrand, *Bibliographie hellénique*, vol. 2, 160. As L. Belléli has observed ('Deux versions', 262 n.1), this is not strictly correct: it was preceded by a version of the Psalms made by a Cretan monk named Agapius, and printed in Venice in 1543.

[4] Belléli, 'Une version'; *idem,* 'Deux versions'.

[5] Hesseling (ed.), *Les cinq livres.*

portant book.[6] In Hesseling's view there was no connection between this Greek translation and either the Septuagint or the later revisions included in Origen's Hexapla.[7]

The Greek translation of Jonah is preserved in two Hebrew manuscript prayer books for the festivals (Jonah is the prescribed prophetic reading for the afternoon of the Day of Atonement). Once again, Belléli was of the opinion that it was read publicly in the synagogue service.[8] Hesseling published a Greek transcription of this text too, editing it from the two manuscripts.[9]

The translation of Job was apparently made by Moses Fabian or Fobian and published in Constantinople in 1576, as a contribution to the teaching of the Hebrew language, but little is known about it.[10]

Another landmark publication of this period was a new edition of the *Graecus Venetus* (Venice, Marcianus gr. VII), a translation of the Pentateuch with Ruth, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations and Daniel. The edition, by Oscar von Gebhardt (1844–1906), accompanied by an introduction by the Leipzig biblical scholar and theologian Franz Delitzsch (1813–90), was published in Leipzig in 1875.[11] The translation is found in a unique manuscript in Venice, dated to the 14th century. It is unusual, to say the least. According to Gebhardt it was made directly from the Masoretic Text, but makes use of the Septuagint, Akylas, and other Greek versions, and is also heavily influenced by the dictionary and commentary of David Kimhi (ca 1160–1235), a Jewish scholar of Narbonne whose works were written in Hebrew. Moreover, the pages of the manuscript are arranged from right to left, like a Hebrew book. On the other hand the language is a highly literary Greek which is far removed from the kind of Greek used in the other documents I shall be discussing. Since this translation is not part of the Byzantine Jewish tradition proper, it will not be discussed in the body of this book, but I shall return to it in Chapter 8.

In the same year as von Gebhardt published his edition of the *Graecus Venetus* another publication appeared that was to have a seminal place in the study of Greek Bible translations: a new edition of the fragments of Origen's Hexapla by the Englishman Frederick Field (1801–85).[12] Field's ambitious project was magisterially executed. In his Prolegomena he comprehensively surveys the various Greek translations included in the Hexapla, but does not

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[6] Belléli, 'D. C. Hesseling'. Hesseling responded in the same issue, see Hesseling, 'Correspondance'.

[7] The Constantinople Polyglot translation is discussed in Chapter 7 below.

[8] Belléli, 'Deux versions', 251.

[9] Hesseling, 'Le livre de Jonas'. This translation, too, is discussed further in Chapter 7 below.

[10] See Appendix 2.

[11] Von Gebhardt, *Graecus Venetus*.

[12] *Origenis Hexaplorum quae supersunt*, ed. Field.

enter into the question which concerns us here, namely the possible Jewish transmission of these translations. Nevertheless, his work remains the foundation stone of all subsequent work on Akylas, Symmachos, Theodotion and the other versions used by Origen.

A third publication of 1875 was an edition of the work of anti-Christian polemic known as the *Book of Nestor the Priest* by Abraham Berliner (1833–1915).[13] Berliner, who was professor of Jewish history and literature at the Orthodox rabbinical seminary in Berlin, edited the text from a manuscript written in Canea (Hania) in Crete in 1493, kept in the Vatican Library. In this manuscript the quotations from the Old and New Testaments are given in Greek (in some other manuscripts they are given in Latin).[14] The Old Testament quotations reveal the influence of the Septuagint, rather than of the Byzantine Jewish tradition. Consequently, although they are certainly worthy of further study, they, like the *Graecus Venetus*, will not be discussed in the body of the book, but will also be mentioned in Chapter 8.

The Cairo Genizah

The story of the discovery of the Cairo Genizah manuscripts and the removal of the bulk of them to Cambridge in the 1890s has often been told.[15] The Genizah was a lumber-room in a synagogue in Old Cairo where unwanted written or printed texts had been thrown for centuries. The Genizah documents would revolutionise knowledge of Jewish life in the Middle Ages, including in the Byzantine empire,[16] while non-documentary manuscripts would shed new light on the history of the Bible as well as of Jewish literature and liturgy. In the background to the discovery lies a keen interest in biblical studies, Christian origins and rabbinic Hebrew in Cambridge in the last decades of the century. Out of this nexus, bringing together a large number of extraordinary scholars, came an edition of the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint) under the direction of Henry Barclay Swete (1887–94)[17] and of

[13] *Sefer Nestor ha-Komer*, ed. Berliner.

[14] For an edition and translation of the Hebrew work, and of the Arabic treatise on which it is based, with a full introduction, see Lasker and Stroumsa, *The Polemic*. The transcription of the Greek quotations is by J. Niehoff-Panagiotides. See also the review by the present writer in *BJGS* 19 (1996): 18–21.

[15] See Reif, *A Jewish archive*, Soskice, *Sisters of Sinai.*

[16] Jacoby, 'What do we learn'; Outhwaite, 'Byzantium and Byzantines in the Cairo Genizah'.

[17] This is the 'smaller' or 'manual' Cambridge edition; a much fuller edition, the 'larger Cambridge Septuagint', began publication in 1906, originally under the supervision of A. E. Brooke (1863–1939) and Norman McLean (1865–1947), who were joined from the

the New Testament by F. J. A. Hort and B. F. Westcott (1881) as well as numerous studies of biblical and related texts and subjects.[18] The two key figures in the story are Solomon Schechter (1847 or 1850–1915), the Rumanian-born Reader in Rabbinics, and Charles Taylor, Master of St John's College (1840–1908). A scholar who combined a career as a mathematician (he published a series of books on conics, for example) with a strong interest in early Christian and rabbinic writings (he notably edited the Mishnah tractate *Avot*[19] and wrote on the *Didache*, Hermas, and the Oxyrhynchus *Logia*), Taylor was a man of independent means, who funded Solomon Schechter's travel to Cairo in 1896–7, from which he returned with the largest and by far the most important hoard of Hebrew manuscripts ever discovered. In the team that was set up to sort the fragments, Taylor himself concentrated on palimpsests (manuscripts reused for writing a later text) as well as post-biblical Hebrew, while a junior scholar, Francis Crawford Burkitt, dealt with Greek. Burkitt (1864–1935), like Taylor, was a man of independent means, who held no university or other office at the time. He had studied theology at Cambridge and had worked on the Sinai Syriac palimpsest of the four gospels. Burkitt soon discovered a palimpsest containing part of Akylas's translation of Kings, and Schechter found another fragment of the same manuscript. With remarkable speed, Burkitt published the fragments before the end of 1897, the very year in which the fragments had reached Cambridge, in a handsome volume, with a preface by Taylor.[20] Three years later Taylor himself published some further fragments of Akylas, from the Psalms, together with fragments of the New Testament and of Origen's Hexapla.[21] These two publications, among the first fruits of the Genizah, are of the greatest importance for the history of Jewish use of Greek Bible translations, and are the first and, so far, the only substantial portions of Akylas's version to have survived the ravages of time.[22]

Henry Barclay Swete

Among the outstanding Cambridge publications at this time in the domain of the Greek Bible is Swete's *Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (1900), uniform in format with the three volumes of his edition of the Septu-

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second volume by H. St. J. Thackeray (1869–1930). It was abandoned, unfinished, the last fascicule having appeared in 1940.

[18] Horbury, 'The Septuagint in Cambridge'.

[19] *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers.*

[20] Burkitt, *Fragments of the Books of Kings.*

[21] Taylor, *Hebrew-Greek Cairo Genizah palimpsests.*

[22] These fragments will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

agint, already mentioned. Swete (1835–1917) was Regius Professor of Divinity and a Fellow of Gonville and Caius College. Such was the success of his work that it was re-issued with revisions in 1902 and again with further revisions by R. S. Ottley in 1914[23] and quickly achieved the status of a classic. For this reason we shall dwell on it for a moment: it can serve as a summary of what was known about our subject at the beginning of the twentieth century, but it also reveals how difficult it was even for a scholar of Swete's undoubted calibre to shake himself free of received opinions and, indeed, prejudices.

Swete writes of the 'Alexandrian version' (the Septuagint):

> It was the Bible of the Egyptian Jews, even of those who belonged to the educated and literary class. The feeling was shared by the rest of the Hellenistic world. In Palestine indeed the version seems to have been received with less enthusiasm, and whether it was used in the synagogues is still uncertain. But elsewhere its acceptance by Greek-speaking Jews was universal during the Apostolic age and in the next generation . . .
>
> When the Lxx. passed into the hands of the Church and was used in controversy with Jewish antagonists, the Jews not unnaturally began to doubt the accuracy of the Alexandrian version . . . But the dissatisfaction with which the Lxx. was regarded by the Jewish leaders of the second century was perhaps not altogether due to polemical causes . . . An official text [of the Hebrew] differing considerably from the text accepted in earlier times had received the approval of the Rabbis, and the Alexandrian version, which represented the older text, began to be suspected and to pass into disuse. Attempts were made to provide something better for Greek-speaking Israelites. (29–30)

At the time, it was generally held that the Jews had abandoned the Septuagint with the advent of Christianity; Swete judiciously moderates this traditional view, noting that the adoption of a different Hebrew text also played a part. Furthermore, he does not fall into the error of inferring that the Jews in abandoning the Septuagint gave up the use of Greek translations as such. Among the newer translations he singles out for special mention those of Akylas, Theodotion and Symmachos. He devotes several pages to Akylas: 'The purpose of his translation was to set aside the interpretation of the Lxx., in so far as it appeared to support the views of the Christian Church' (31). Swete cites Christian testimonies, dating from the third to the sixth century, to the favour in which this translation was held by Jews; and while he avers that it was distrusted by Christians, 'who saw in it the work of a champion of Rabbinism as well as a bold attempt to displace the Septuagint', he is honest enough to admit that 'the few Christian writers who were students of the Hebrew Bible learnt to recognise the fidelity of Aquila's work' (33). He goes on to mention the fragments of Akylas recovered from the Cairo Genizah (34). The other two named translators, Theodotion and Symmachos, are said (according to

[23] All three editions have the same page numbers.

the prevailing opinion at that time) to have been converts from Judaism to Ebionite Christianity.

All the sources mentioned so far antedate the beginning of our period. However, Swete proceeds to mention the *Graecus Venetus*, insisting (against a contrary opinion which he mentions) that the translator was a Jew, who 'may have been moved by a desire to place before the dominant Orthodox Church a better rendering of the Old Testament than the Lxx.' (57). Finally, he mentions very briefly a manuscript translation of the Psalms dated 22 April 1450 (in fact, although he does not say so, this is a Christian manuscript)[24] and the version of the Pentateuch into 'modern Greek' printed in Hebrew characters in Constantinople in 1547, which we have already encountered.

Swete is a very good representative of the approach that for a long time dominated virtually all discussion of the Greek Bible versions. This approach characteristically engages openly and indeed enthusiastically with the study of Judaism down to the advent of Christianity, seeing the older religion as an important element in the pre-history of the younger, but allowing it little in the way of an independent existence, and certainly evincing no interest in its internal life and culture, once Christianity comes on the scene. As we have seen, the Jews were considered to have turned their backs collectively on Hellenic culture once it was adopted by the Christians, and even to have abandoned their own sacred scriptures on discovering that they were also being used by Christians and indeed cited in polemic against Judaism. Such views were widespread in the circles in which Swete had been raised, and to draw attention to them is in no way to accuse him of anti-Semitism or anything of the sort. Yet it is hard not to notice a certain discomfort when he speaks of Jews (as evinced for instance in the use of the biblical term 'Israelites' to refer to Jews of the later Roman period). An extreme example of this unease is the title he gives to a chapter in his book entirely devoted to Jewish authors writing in Greek: 'Literary use of the Septuagint by non-Christian Hellenists'.

It is in keeping with this approach that Swete asserts, without citing any evidence whatsoever, that the Jews came to distrust the older Greek version because it was used by Christians and gradually abandoned it, that the translation ascribed to Akylas was motivated by anti-Christian polemical ends, and that it was in its turn distrusted by Christians because it was too rabbinic in character and was intended to displace the Septuagint. All these assertions have been questioned by subsequent scholarship and shown to be ill-founded. Indeed, Swete himself is compelled to admit that Akylas's version was highly regarded for its accuracy by Origen and Jerome, whom he describes (34) as

[24] According to Bádenas de la Peña, 'Aproximación', 14, it originated in a Karaite milieu.

'the two most competent witnesses in the ancient Church'. As for the supposed Jewish abandonment of the Septuagint, it is curious that he apparently sees no inconsistency in asserting that the supposed medieval Jewish translator of the *Graecus Venetus* made use of it, along with Akylas, Symmachos and Theodotion (56–7). Incidentally, it is entirely congruent with his general approach that, as we have seen, he attributes a polemical motive to this translator too.

Given this background, it is perhaps hardly surprising that in his account of the medieval and early modern Jewish versions he shows no interest whatever in their cultural context within Judaism, or in their relationships to each other and to the earlier Greek versions. With the exception of the *Graecus Venetus*, these are mentioned summarily, in a paragraph set in small type (58).

And yet, as we have seen, Swete was writing at a time of unprecedented interest in these testimonies to Jewish use of Greek Bible translations. He himself mentions von Gebhardt's new edition of the *Graecus Venetus*, the description of the 1547 Constantinople Pentateuch by Belléli, and the transcription of the Greek text into Greek characters by Hesseling. In 1902 he added a reference to an essay by Adolf Neubauer on non-Hebrew languages used by the Jews, in which the translation of Job dated 1576 was mentioned. He also mentioned the publication of the Genizah palimpsests of Akylas by Burkitt, and in the 1902 revision he added the publication of further palimpsest fragments by Taylor, as well as a papyrus fragment. But while the mention of these important publications on aspects of Jewish use of Greek Bible translations testifies to the breadth and thoroughness of Swete's erudition, the absence of other recent publications that could have helped to flesh out the cultural context, and specifically the continuing use of Greek language in Jewish synagogues and academies, such as Perles's article in the *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, Krauss's *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter*, or the discovery that some Jews in Corfu still chanted hymns in Greek in their synagogues, presented first to the 5th Congress of Orientalists in Berlin by Spyridon Papageorgios,[25] may be thought to betray a lack of curiosity or imagination on his part.

Thus although Swete was in a position to trace part, at least, of the Jewish reception and transmission of Greek Bible translations in the Christian era, according to the information available in his time, he failed to do so, partly perhaps from lack of imagination and partly, it is reasonable to suspect, from ingrained prejudice.

[25] Papageorgios, 'Merkwürdige Hymnen'.

David S. Blondheim

It was left to the American philologist David Blondheim (1884–1934) to take the next step. Blondheim was born in Baltimore, and for much of his life he was associated with Johns Hopkins University in that city, where he was first a student and from 1924 Professor of Romance Philology. His speciality was Judaeo-Romance, a subject he made peculiarly his own. In 1924 Blondheim published an article tracing the impact of ancient Greek versions (the Septuagint and Akylas) on later Greek Jewish Bible translations.[26] He begins by listing the sources laid under contribution. These are, in the chronological order he adopts:

1. The *Arukh*, a Rabbinic Hebrew dictionary by Nathan ben Yehiel of Rome, completed in 1101;[27]
2. An unpublished Genizah fragment of Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) in Greek in Hebrew characters;[28]
3. The translation of Jonah published by Hesseling, and dated by him to the 13th century;[29]
4. The *Graecus Venetus*, probably 14th century;[30]
5. Notes in cursive Greek added in the margins of a Septuagint manuscript (F);[31]

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[26] Blondheim, 'Échos du judéo-hellénisme'.

[27] See Chapter 6.

[28] MANUSCRIPT 4. Blondheim provides a Greek transcription of this fragment, which will be discussed in Chapter 6. It was brought to his notice by Jacob Mann, of Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, a historian who worked on Genizah documents.

[29] MANUSCRIPTS 17 & 18. This dating rests on an erroneous reading of a date on a deed of sale in MANUSCRIPT 17. The date of sale has now been corrected to 1514, and an approximate date in the 14th century has been assigned to the manuscript: see *Catalogue*, ed., May, 181 (ad no. 1144*).

[30] Blondheim follows Mercati in recognising that the translator was not a Jew at the time he made it; his knowledge of Jewish sources and particularly of the tradition of biblical translation show, however, that he had studied under Jewish teachers. Blondheim mentions that it was Joseph Reider who had brought Mercati's work on this text to his notice. Reider (1886–1960) was born in Volhynia and studied at Göttingen before migrating to the United States in 1904. He conducted doctoral research on Akylas's translation under Max L. Margolis at Dropsie College, Philadelphia (Reider, *Prolegomena*), which eventually led to the posthumous publication of *An index to Aquila*. Reider's papers, now housed in the library of the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies in the University of Pennsylvania, contain many significant unpublished items in the general area of Greek Bible translations.

[31] MANUSCRIPT 14. Field, with characteristic throughness, included some of these notes in his *Hexapla*, and they are reported systematically in Brooke and McLean's larger Cambridge Septuagint, under the siglum F^b. Blondheim says he has noticed similar notes in

6. The Greek text of the 1547 Constantinople Pentateuch, transcribed by Hesseling;
7. The translation of Job printed in Constantinople in 1576;[32]
8. A Greek translation of the Aramaic portions of the Bible, entitled *Meirat 'eynayim*, together with a glossary to the entire Bible, completed in 1627 by a Karaite named Elijah Afeda Beghi.[33]

We should note in the first place that Blondheim himself compiled this list of sources, with no small difficulty. As he remarks, the subject of later Jewish versions was so little known that no complete bibliography existed. His list could hardly be bettered today, with the exception of some manuscripts that were unknown in his time. This collection of sources furnished him with materials to compile a comparative vocabulary of 60 Greek words exemplifying the consistency of translation of specific Hebrew words over the course of fifteen centuries: a remarkable achievement, particularly for someone who was not a Greek specialist.

Blondheim's interest in this subject arose out of the research he had been conducting for some time on Latin and Romance translations, embodied in his book *Les parlers judéo-romans et la Vetus Latina*.[34] In fact, he saw fit to reprint the article as an appendix to the book, the second part of which consists of a Latin comparative vocabulary with many references to the Greek.[35] In the book he argues that the *Vetus Latina* was a Jewish version, based on the Septuagint and corrected towards the Masoretic Text, and that this Latin version in its turn was the source of later Jewish translations into various Romance languages, which were also influenced by Akylas. Thus his work on the medieval Greek tradition was directly related to his major project on the Romance versions.

Despite its undoubted importance, Blondheim's work was virtually ignored both by Jewish medievalists and by biblical scholars. An exception was Ludwig Blau (1861–1936), Principal of the Jewish Theological Seminary of Budapest, who devoted twenty-five pages to a review of the book.[36] Blau is

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two other manuscripts collated by Brooke and McLean, i and p (MANUSCRIPTS 15 & 16). The dating implied for these notes is erroneous: it has been shown that those in F, at least, were written in the 11th century. See Chapter 6.

[32] Blondheim was apparently unable to find a copy of this publication. He cites from Jacques Le Long's *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Paris, 1723) the information that there was a copy in his day in the library of the Paris Oratoire.

[33] The translation was published by Abraham Danon. Blondheim expresses the hope that Danon would realise his plan to publish the lexicon as well. On the author, see Wilensky, 'Rabbi Elijah Afeda Baghi'.

[34] Blondheim, *Les parlers judéo-romans*.

[35] See the Greek index to the book, prepared by Blondheim's sister Grace.

[36] Blau, 'Review: The relation of the Bible translations'.

strongly supportive of Blondheim's surprising arguments and conclusions. He adds arguments of his own, from the rabbinic literature, in support of the idea that the Latin translation was based on the Greek, and he associates it with the second-century rabbi Simeon ben Gamaliel II. He also argues from the form of biblical allusions in Greek Jewish inscriptions. Blau concludes his review with these words: 'This is a book both learned and ingenious, which will be read by students with profit. The author will receive the gratitude of all those interested in this study.'

The book's inherent qualities and Blau's recommendation did not suffice to whet the appetite of the scholarly world, however, and Blondheim's contribution to research on the reception and transmission of Greek Bible versions made very little impression on specialists outside a very narrow circle of textual editors.

New sources

A new era opened in 1979 with the publication of an introduction to the Greek versions of the Bible by the Madrid scholar Natalio Fernández Marcos.[37] Breaking with the approach followed by Swete, his outstanding predecessor, Fernández Marcos sets out the Jewish transmission in parallel to the Christian one. For the first time the Jewish tradition, from Akylas and his predecessors to the Constantinople Pentateuch, was clearly visible along the lines adumbrated by Blondheim. In a second edition of the work, published in 1998,[38] Fernández Marcos was able to take account of the present author's work on Genizah fragments between 1980 and 1996, culminating in a corpus of Genizah materials written in a mixture of Hebrew and Greek.[39] Among these Genizah fragments were several bearing on the use of Bible versions: the Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) fragment first published (in Greek transliteration only) by Blondheim, bilingual glossaries, scholia and commentaries containing Greek glosses.

Since 1998 other texts have come to light: Greek glosses in the margin of a Hebrew manuscript,[40] a Genizah fragment of an early bilingual glossary,[41]

[37] Fernández Marcos, *Introducción*. For an assessment of the importance of this publication for our subject see de Lange, 'The Jews of Byzantium and the Greek Bible'. See also the remarks of Aitken, 'Introducing the Septuagint'.

[38] Fernández Marcos, *Introducción*, second edition. There is an English translation by Watson, *The Septuagint in context*.

[39] De Lange, *GJT*.

[40] MANUSCRIPT 13.

[41] MANUSCRIPT 3.

and a substantial glossary on parts of the Former and Latter Prophets.[42] All these texts will be discussed in the pages that follow.

[42] MANUSCRIPT 19.

Chapter 2

Byzantine Judaism

The historical setting

Byzantine Judaism is a neglected subject. The reasons for this neglect need not detain us.[1] Suffice it to say that there is a minimal modern bibliography on the subject, and the general histories both of medieval Judaism and of Byzantium tend to pass over it in silence. It may be useful, therefore, to review some of the main lines here. In doing so we shall concentrate particularly on the scholarly and religious issues that underlie the subject of this book. It is, however, necessary to say a few words about Byzantium in general and about the place of the Jewish minority within Byzantine society.[2]

Byzantium is a relatively modern term for the Christian, primarily Greek-speaking state that had its capital at Constantinople (formerly called Byzantion) on the Bosporos. The city of Constantinople was founded by Constantine I, the first Christian emperor of Rome, in 324, and it is convenient to take this date as the approximate starting-point of Byzantine history, which is conventionally divided into a number of distinct periods. In this book we shall adopt a simplified division into four main periods.

The first period ends with the Arab conquests of the 630s, when Egypt, Palestine and Syria ceased to be part of the empire. During this period the continuity with the pre-Christian urban society of the Roman empire was more evident than the discontinuities. The Roman empire was divided into two; the western empire effectively ceased to exist in 476, but emperor Justinian I in the 6th century brought parts of it (notably Italy) temporarily under Constantinople's control. This is the period that in Palestine saw the rise of Rabbinic Judaism, with the compilation of the Palestinian Talmud and the beginning of the midrashic literature, and also the building and rebuilding of the many synagogues whose remains still exist. About Judaism in other parts of the empire we are not well informed; in the latter part of the period it seems that the Greek language that was the vehicle for Jewish religious life

[1] See de Lange, 'Qui a tué les Juifs de Byzance?'.

[2] De Lange, 'Research on Byzantine Jewry'; Jacoby, 'The Jewish communities of the Byzantine world'.

was increasingly challenged by proponents of Hebrew, who appear to have been associated with the rabbinic movement.

The following two centuries are known to Byzantine historians as the 'Dark Ages'; for Jewish Byzantium this obscure period continues for a further century, until the late tenth century. This was a period of great territorial losses and of the breakdown of urban life, followed by a significant economic and cultural revival. Very little is known about Jewish life at this time: despite major difficulties it is clear that there was considerably continuity, but also radical change as the champions of the Hebrew language and rabbinic culture gained the upper hand, so that by the end of the period, although Greek continued to be the spoken language of the Jews, education and religious life were based on Hebrew.

The period between Basil II and the Fourth Crusade (late tenth to early thirteenth century), was a period of further territorial gains and losses for the empire. This is the period illuminated by the documents of the Cairo Genizah. We are relatively well informed about Byzantine Jewish culture at this time, because we have quite a number of surviving Hebrew writings, such as Bible commentaries and liturgical poems, and even a small number of actual manuscripts.[3] This period, in which Karaism (with its strong interest in the Bible) became established in Byzantium, was also a period of notable intellectual flowering in Byzantium generally. In the middle of the 12th century we have a snapshot of the Jewish communities in Benjamin of Tudela's famous travelogue.[4] The conquest of Constantinople by the Latin crusaders of the Fourth Crusade was a seemingly devastating blow to an empire that was already militarily weakened and being torn apart by internal strife.

From 1204 the political map changed again. The restored 'empire of the Straits' was territorially a shadow of its former self. Important Greek-speaking Jewish communities (notably in Crete and Euboea) were now under Venetian rule; others (such as Chios) were under the rule of Genoa; and even within Constantinople some Jews were now Venetian and Genoese subjects. Culturally, these communities remained part of the Byzantine Jewish nexus. This last period of Byzantine history was a time of great cultural richness for the Jews, as attested by large numbers of writings (notably in the areas of science and *kabbalah*, but in many other domains as well, including liturgical poetry and biblical commentary), surviving mostly in later copies. This was the period of Ottoman advance, culminating in the conquest of Constantinople after a siege in 1453 and the last Byzantine strongholds a few years later.

The borders of the empire changed dramatically in the course of more than a thousand years. Important Jewish populations found themselves included or

[3] De Lange, 'A thousand years', 155–8.

[4] See below. For an overview see Jacoby, 'Benjamin of Tudela and his "Book of Travels"'.

excluded, and some were displaced as a result of wars. The permanent loss of Egypt, Palestine and Syria under emperor Herakleios in the 630s made an enormous difference, as large and prosperous communities suddenly found themselves outside the confines of the empire and cut off from ready contact with Constantinople and other European centres. The southern Balkans and Asia Minor constituted the nucleus of Byzantium for most of its subsequent history. The important (and relatively well documented) communities of southern Italy, reconquered for the empire under Justinian, remained under Byzantine rule until the Norman conquests of the eleventh century. After this time they gradually lost their Byzantine character. Crete was under Arab rule from the early ninth to the mid-tenth century, and (together with Euboea and some smaller places) became a Venetian possession after the Fourth Crusade. It is only from this time that we have any real knowledge of Jewish life in medieval Crete (indeed it soon becomes one of the best-documented Jewish communities, thanks to Venetian and Jewish habits of record-keeping). However by general consensus the Cretan Jews have to be considered culturally a part of Byzantine Jewry, as despite contacts with Venice they retained their Greek language and customs. The same is true of Negroponte (Euboea), which had close ties with Crete. As for Crimea, Byzantine influence here was spasmodic to say the least; moreover, Jewish life in the region is poorly documented.

Broadly speaking, then, when we speak of Byzantine Judaism what we have in mind is the Greek-speaking Judaism of the Byzantine territories, focused on the southern Balkans and Asia Minor for most of the time, with the addition of southern Italy from the 6th to the 11th century. Too little is known about Judaism in Cyprus for the island (effectively lost to the Latins in the 12th century) to be brought into our purview. Crete and the other Greek-speaking Venetian colonies are, however, included. We should not forget that groups of Greek-speaking Jews from Byzantium could be found at various times in Egypt and in Jerusalem.

Sources

Something must be said at this point about the sources for the writing of Byzantine Jewish history. Several types of materials that are essential for the writing of Byzantine history in general offer little or nothing for the history of the Jews. We have no Jewish coins or seals; leaving aside the earliest period there are no excavated synagogues or other Jewish buildings, no Jewish iconography, and very few inscriptions; and there is almost nothing in the way of ritual objects, charms and amulets, jewellery or domestic items with a demonstrable Jewish origin.

Given the dearth of other types of Jewish *realia*, heightened importance attaches to the one type of artifact that does survive in reasonable quantities, namely manuscripts. The precise number of Byzantine Hebrew manuscripts that survive in whole or part is not known, because specialists have only recently begun to develop objective criteria for identifying a Hebrew manuscript as Byzantine. It has been estimated that about 10 per cent of all medieval Hebrew manuscripts are Byzantine,[5] and if this estimate is correct there could be as many as 10,000 such manuscripts and fragments in all. Dated and localised manuscripts from Byzantium are rare before the beginning of the fourteenth century but become increasingly common thereafter. These manuscripts are potentially an extremely rich source of knowledge about Byzantine Jewish life, both as physical objects and for the written texts and annotations they carry.

No Byzantine Jewish archives have been preserved, and only in the materials recovered from the Cairo Genizah do we have much in the way of personal or family documents, such as deeds of marriage or divorce, wills or genealogies. It is impossible to be certain whether or not the Byzantine written texts (documents, prayer books and scholarly texts) found in the Cairo Genizah represent the remains of one or more personal archives; we seem at least to have copies of part of the personal correspondence of one of the foremost Byzantine Karaite scholars, Tobias ben Moses.[6] Some documents specifically referring to Byzantium are listed in J. Starr's *Jews in the Byzantine empire*; others have been identified and published more recently.[7]

The chance survival of a family chronicle compiled in the mid-eleventh century by Ahimaas of Oria (in southern Italy), and extending back some two hundred years, has shed considerable light on Jewish life in Byzantine south Italy,[8] but such documents are very rare. A good deal of information about individuals and about social and economic history can be gleaned from legal documents, such as responsa and local bye-laws (*takkanot*).[9]

The one Hebrew source that has been systematically exploited by anyone writing about Byzantium in the twelfth century is the travelogue of Benjamin

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[5] Beit-Arié, 'The codicological data-base', 169.

[6] See de Lange, 'Byzantium in the Cairo Genizah', and further references there, to which add Outhwaite, 'Karaite epistolary Hebrew'.

[7] See Shaked, *A tentative bibliography*; de Lange, 'Greek and Byzantine fragments'; *idem*, *GJT*. See also the studies by Jacoby, 'What do we learn?', Niehoff-Panagiotidis, 'Byzantinische Lebenswelt'. Genizah documents, included some relating to Byzantium, form the basis for the magisterial work by Goitein, *A Mediterranean society*.

[8] Italian translation, with introduction, notes and bibliography by Colafemmina, *Sefer Yuhasin*. On this and other Jewish sources for the middle period see de Lange and Holo, 'Jewish Sources'.

[9] See particularly the collection of Cretan *takkanot*, collected originally by Elijah Kapsali in the early sixteenth century and edited by Artom and Cassuto, *Statuta*.

of Tudela, who listed the names of the leaders of each Jewish community he visited and gave its size, and sometimes added some further information.[10] It is an indication of the sparsity of our other sources that this bare list of places, numbers and names, with occasional further comments, constitutes one of our most important sources.

A good deal of historical information comes to us from the abundant Hebrew prose and verse works written in Byzantium, some of which are discussed further below. Many such works remain unpublished. In some cases, because of the prevailing negative attitude to Byzantine Jewish culture, authors writing in Byzantium were wrongly located elsewhere; no doubt further examples of this kind await discovery.[11]

Finally, there are some non-Jewish written sources, in Greek and other languages, that shed light on the Jewish minority.

The Christian and Jewish contexts

The Jews were just one element in the population of a multi-ethnic, multicultural empire, but they were a distinctive element, set apart by their religion from the overwhelmingly Christian majority.[12] Generally tolerated by the state, they were under pressure to convert to Orthodoxy, and on rare occasions the state decreed that they should abandon their ancestral faith. Jewish proselytising, on the other hand, and even spontaneous conversion of Christians to Judaism, were illegal.

The Jewish communities were administered internally according to their own laws. Once the rabbinic movement became established, in the course of the 'Dark Age', these were basically the laws of the rabbinic *halakhah*, although the Byzantine Rabbis tended to retain certain ancient practices that were not current in rabbinic practice elsewhere. From at least the early 11th century an important counterweight to the authority of the Rabbis was provided by Karaism, a form of Judaism that rejected the divine authority of the Talmud. Locally strong, particularly in the metropolis, the Karaites seem to have been a minority within the Jewish communities. Their relations with the Rabbanites were often hostile (in Constantinople in the mid-twelfth century we hear of a wall constructed to separate the two factions), but there are also indications of relations, at least at a scholarly level. There were also some

[10] See Ochoa, 'El imperio bizantino'; Jacoby, 'Benjamin of Tudela in Byzantium'.

[11] For an exposition of this problem with some examples see de Lange, 'Hebrew scholarship in Byzantium'.

[12] *Idem*, 'Hebrews, Greeks or Romans?'.

other, smaller sects, such as the Epicureans of Cyprus mentioned by Benjamin of Tudela.[13]

From a purely geographical point of view, the Jews of Byzantium occupied a special place in the Jewish world. One only has to glance at the map of the Jewish world in the Middle Ages to see that Constantinople stands at the very centre of that world, equidistant from its extremities. Trade routes radiate from it like a spider's web, linking the city by sea to Italy, north Africa and Spain, and to the trade routes of Russia, Khazaria and the Middle East.[14] The network of trade routes joined the Jewish communities of the world to one another. Byzantine Jewry was actively engaged in international trade. The centrality of the Byzantine Jews has its implications for their cultural history. In addition to whatever interaction they may have had with the culture of their Christian environment they were in close contact with the Jewish centres both in neighbouring regions and also in more remote regions with which they enjoyed commercial and political ties. Byzantine Jews travelled abroad, and many foreign Jews came to Byzantium, for short visits or to settle more permanently. These contacts constantly challenged and enriched the culture of the Byzantine Jews.

Apart from their synchronic relations with their immediate environment and with other Jewish centres, they also had their own links with the Jewish past, specifically with the ancient Judaeo-Greek culture. The best evidence of such continuity is found specifically in the materials presented in this book. However, there were also serious discontinuities. With the exception of the biblical translations discussed here, and a few translations into Hebrew, the ancient Greek Jewish literature is transmitted by the Byzantine Church, not by the Byzantine Jews. Byzantine Christianity has such a strong dose of Greek Judaism in its 'genes' that it is sometimes hard for us to tell whether a specific element shared by Byzantine and ancient Greek Jews is transmitted via a Jewish or a Christian conduit.

Byzantine Judaism and Christianity shared much of their cultural outlook. In both, for example, the reading and exposition of the Bible was a central element. At a deeper level, both share an attitude to tradition that has sometimes, misunderstood, been the source of a certain under-valuation or even contempt on the part of outside observers. The respectful transmission of tradition is more important in both than innovation. Byzantine Judaism has given us manuscript copies, compilations and commentaries, rather than ambitious new creations.

One striking difference between Byzantine Judaism and Christianity lies in the attitude to art. Whereas the late antique synagogues have left us a rich iconographic record, best know from the frescoes of Dura Europos in Syria

[13] De Lange, 'Can we speak of Jewish Orthodoxy in Byzantium?'.
[14] See *idem*, *Atlas of the Jewish world*, 38–9.

but well exemplified also in the mosaic pavements of Galilee, so far as we know later Byzantine Judaism was aniconic, while Byzantine Christianity, after some hard-fought struggles, maintained the iconic tradition and invested considerable effort in it. Lacking the direct access to the minds of worshippers offered by visual art, the leaders of the synagogue were compelled to invest even more effort in elaborating and representing the biblical message in words. In this effort they relied on a high level of public education, which was even appreciated by Jews outside the empire.[15]

Continuity and discontinuity, and relations with the Christian environment and the wider Jewish world, are well observed in the linguistic history of the Byzantine Jews, and specifically in the relative roles of Greek and Hebrew. It is clear, particularly but not only from inscriptions, that in Roman antiquity the main and probably only language of Jews in Europe, Asia Minor and Egypt was Greek. From around the third century AD this situation began to change, slowly at first but with growing momentum in the subsequent centuries, as Hebrew came to be revived for national and religious reasons,[16] and by the fifth century it had begun to claim a real role as a language of Jewish worship and of Bible study, beginning in the Land of Israel. (This move coincided, at least chronologically, with the adoption of various national languages such as Coptic, Syriac and Armenian, in the Christian churches of the Near East.) Over the course of several centuries Greek would lose its dominant position, and the areas in which it was the principal or only language would shrink considerably, and at the same time for Greek-speaking Jews it would no longer be the language of their education and their worship, giving way to Hebrew. This far-reaching cultural process constitutes the background to the story told in this book. From the early ninth century in southern Italy we can witness Hebrew becoming established for tombstones and for literature. By the year 1000 if not earlier it is clear that the main written language of Jews through the Byzantine empire was Hebrew. A dramatic upheaval had clearly taken place, though it is impossible to establish when or how. Probably it can be traced back to Palestine, where we have the earliest evidence of a revival of Hebrew, and where the epigraphic record testifies to the gradual spread of Hebrew and elimination of Greek. By the time of Justinian, Hebrew is clearly well established there, both in the synagogal liturgy and in other contexts. It is most natural to suppose that the same pressure that had operated in the east gradually spread to the European provinces of the empire.[17]

One significant aspect of the adoption of Hebrew by the Byzantine Jews, however it happened, was that links were thereby strengthened with other

[15] De Lange, 'Jewish education'.

[16] *Idem*, 'The revival of the Hebrew language'; cf. Alexander, 'How did the Rabbis learn Hebrew?'.

[17] *Idem*, 'The Hebrew language'.

Jewish communities. Their Greek tradition, had they clung to it doggedly, would have served to isolate them from other Jews, whether in Romance- and German-speaking Europe, in the Arab world, or elsewhere. Hebrew, the universal language of the Jews in the Middle Ages, was a useful means of communication for a society involved in international trade, but it was far more than this. First and foremost, it was an assertion of a common religious identity. It also enabled them to participate in a written culture that knew no geographical or political boundaries. Jewish students from Byzantium sat at the feet of teachers such as Rashi in the west and Hai Gaon in the east; works by Byzantine Jews were read abroad, and works by foreign Jews were studied in Byzantium. The Jews of Byzantium knew themselves to be the people of Israel, part of a worldwide diaspora that would one day be gathered into the Land of Israel at the coming of the Messiah, and the Hebrew language was one expression of this identity.[18]

If Hebrew became the written and liturgical language of the Byzantine Jews in the Middle Ages, however, their spoken language continued to be Greek. As we shall see in the course of this book, Greek played a part in their education and in the life of the synagogue too. With very rare exceptions, however, when they wrote Greek they always wrote it in the Hebrew alphabet. The spoken Greek of the Jews was identical to that of most contemporary Christians (although they had some distinctive items of vocabulary).[19] However, as we shall see, when they studied and read the Bible in Greek they tended to use a special artificial form of Greek, which aimed to represent the grammar of Hebrew using Greek vocabulary. Many of the words used must have seemed highly archaic in the Middle Ages.[20]

We should note that Jews would have no difficulty in communicating at an everyday level with Christians in the empire. They generally lacked the Greek education, however, to conduct an elegant or a learned conversation. Did this matter? Among the Christians there were other communities that were identified by distinctive languages, such as Syriac, Armenian or Georgian. But the ethos of the empire had changed considerably since the time of Justinian, when someone like John of Ephesos (ca 507–86), who lived for a long time in Constantinople and was close to the emperor, chose to write in Syriac. The dominant culture of the state was Hellenic, and as time went on this became truer than ever, despite the very varied ethnic composition of the population.

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[18] De Lange, 'Hebrews, Greeks or Romans?'.
[19] *Idem*, 'Jewish use of Greek'.
[20] Krivoruchko, 'Medieval and early modern Judaeo-Greek biblical translations'.

Literature

With these various points in mind, let us now take a rapid look at the Byzantine Jewish literature. From about the 9th century, and much earlier in Palestine, almost all of this was in Hebrew; only very rarely do we hear of Jews writing in Greek.

Each culture has its characteristic forms of literature, and its particular range of interests. The Hebrew literature from Byzantium can be compared on the one hand with the contemporary Greek literature, and on the other with the contemporary Hebrew literature from other parts of the world.

Between the Jewish and Christian literature of Byzantium there are several parallels that spring to mind, but two stand out in particular: midrash and hymnography.

Leaving aside some early efforts that are very hard to date, the genre of midrash seems to begin in Byzantine Palestine in the fifth century with the *Midrash on Genesis*, the first of a long line of midrashic compilations all probably produced in Byzantine lands or under Byzantine influence, and all constructed in a similar way. The fundamental characteristic of this type of midrash is that it takes the reader (and this is surely a genre of written literature which is targeted at a reader, not a hearer) through a scriptural book and weaves around the text a garland of fragmentary interpretations which are either anonymous or are ascribed to the great Rabbis of old. At the earliest stage there is a minimum of visible literary artifice: the extracts are introduced with the briefest and most formulaic of editorial phrases. In fact to call them 'extracts' is to play the midrashist's game: in truth we have no means of knowing whether the material of the midrash is excerpted from written commentaries or homilies of the Rabbis, now lost, or whether they are derived from some other form of more or less authentically transmitted rabbinic tradition, or even, I suppose, whether they were made up for the purpose by the midrashist himself (or any combination of these). It is hard to avoid a comparison with the Greek Christian genre of the biblical *catenae* or *seirai*.[21] The *catenae*, like the midrash, consist of a sequence of excerpts on the biblical text, selected from the classical patristic authors, and introduced either by the name of the source or by a formula analogous to those employed in the midrash. As with the midrash, there is no editorial attempt at consistency of interpretation. On the contrary, the keynote seems to be diversity, or at any rate illustration of the richness of the tradition, and a desire to preserve for posterity the nuggets of patristic interpretation. Like the midrash, the *catena* emerges in fifth-century Palestine: its origins have been connected with the 'School of Gaza', a group of Christian rhetoricians of whom the best known is Proco-

[21] Devreesse, 'Chaînes exégétiques grecques'; Petit, 'La chaîne grecque'; see also de Lange, 'Midrash et Byzance'.

pius of Gaza (ca 475–ca 538). There are two important differences between the two bodies of literature. While the *catenae* are in Greek, the midrash is in Hebrew, with only a smattering of the vernacular languages, Aramaic and Greek. And in the case of the Christian fathers we know that they published commentaries and homilies, and some of them survive; in the case of the Rabbis, not only do we not possess any of their works, we do not even know that they ever published anything. We can only speculate on the possible relationship between the midrash and the *catenae*, and whether one genre influenced the other. We may note two things. Firstly, the midrash rests on a very strong concept of tradition which it actively promotes. And secondly, so far as we know the *Midrash on Genesis* represents a new development in Jewish literature, and there is at least a real possibility that its form was borrowed from the Christian environment.

The term 'midrash' is sometimes also applied to short homilies and tracts[22] that are of Byzantine origin and betray specifically Byzantine preoccupations, for example apocalyptic visions of a coming catastrophe, or in another case a description of king Solomon in the guise of the Byzantine emperor, the throne on which he is seated actually being the amazing gadget-ridden throne of the Byzantine *basileus* as portrayed in the Byzantine *Book of Ceremonies* and in various historical sources of the 8th to the 10th centuries.[23] To consider these here, however, would distract us from our purpose.

The origins of hymnography both in Judaism and in Christianity are obscure. The Christian poet Ephrem was composing hymns in Aramaic as early as the 4th century, and it is possible to categorise Byzantine religious poetry as an eastern import: 'Its form, like the religion that it celebrated, comes from the Syrian East'.[24] The greatest of the Greek Christian hymnographers was the converted Syrian Jew Romanos, the inventor of the versified sermon known as the *kontakion*.[25] Hebrew liturgical poetry too emerges in the Byzantine Near East, and among Greek- and Aramaic-speaking Jews. Was the Hebrew poetry based on Aramaic or Greek models, or was it partly at least an organic development of a Hebrew tradition? This is hard to judge, as is the extent of Jewish influence on Greek Christian hymnography.[26] At any rate, the great Byzantine Christian tradition of hymnography is echoed in Byzantine Judaism. From the earliest *piyyutim* of Byzantine Palestine to the medieval poets of the *Mahzor Romania* we have an enormous legacy of Hebrew

[22] Such as some of those collected by Jellinek in his *Bet Ha-midrasch*.

[23] Patlagean, 'Une image de Salomon'.

[24] Runciman, *Byzantine Civilisation*.

[25] Grosdidier de Matons, *Romanos le Mélode*; Schork, *Sacred song*.

[26] 'It could hardly have developed without the Jewish tradition', Haussig, *A History of Byzantine civilization*, 47. Cf. Malachi, 'Christian and Jewish liturgical poetry'.

liturgical poetry, much of it banal but occasionally reaching a certain height of poetic expression.[27]

In the domain of biblical commentary it would have been hard for the Byzantine Jews to rival the Greek Christian tradition, going back to Origen and Hippolytos in the third century. Yet from the 11th century on we have an explosion of biblical commentary in Jewish Byzantium: this may be due to the influence of the great northern French commentator Rashi, or more plausibly to the intellectual ferment caused by the controversy between Rabbanites and Karaites, which centred on the interpretation of the Bible. Several of the best-known Byzantine Jewish commentators were Karaites, but there were also Rabbanites, such as the very influential Tobias ben Eliezer of Kastoria, who compiled his *Lekah Tov* on the Pentateuch probably in Salonica at the beginning of the 12th century. The Spaniard Abraham Ibn Ezra, surveying different approaches to biblical commentary in the introduction to his commentary on the Pentateuch, singled this work out for unfavourable mention, together with another commentary of the same period by Meir of Constantinople: they are typically Byzantine in their reliance on the midrashic approach and their avoidance of rational and grammatical investigation: 'Now in view of the fact that homiletical interpretations abound in the works of the ancients, why should modern scholars go to the trouble of re-writing them?'[28] This dismissive judgment is not entirely unfair, from the particular standpoint of an Ibn Ezra: the *Lekah Tov* is as much a compilation of traditional materials as an original work (it stands in its way as a testimony to the Byzantine respect for tradition). Yet it does represent a move towards something new in Byzantine Jewish Bible commentary. From its time until the end of the Byzantine empire we have an abundance of biblical commentaries, many of which are available only in manuscript. Many more must be lost. Some of them take the form of supercommentaries on classic commentaries, notably those of Rashi and Ibn Ezra. This is certainly an important department of Byzantine Jewish literary production, both Rabbanite and Karaite. It is impossible to rule out a certain influence of the Christian environment, but nor should it be given too much credence. This is a development which could have come about through internal Jewish dynamics.

The same is no doubt true of commentary on rabbinic texts and hymns, although it is possible that Byzantine Rabbanites, who were involved in religious polemical exchanges with Christians, may well have coloured their

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[27] For a general introduction to the genre see Weinberger, *Jewish Hymnography*. For a collection of texts see *idem*, *Rabbanite and Karaite liturgical poetry*. On the Byzantine festival prayer book, the *Mahzor Romania*, see Goldschmidt, '*Mahzor Romania*'; *idem*, '*Mahzorim* '.

[28] Introduction to his commentary on the Pentateuch, translation in *JBE*, 215.

attitude to the classical Rabbis by what they knew of the Byzantine Christian attitude to the patristic authors.[29]

There is virtually nothing in the Jewish literature to parallel the Christian interest in hagiography. The relative lack of historical writing among Jews is also surprising, given the place it occupies among Christians, whether in the form of popular chronicles, personal memoirs or self-conscious histories following ancient models. The interest that could be taken in such writing is illustrated by the popularity of the *Yosippon*, a sort of Hebrew adaptation of Josephus produced in Italy in the ninth or tenth century. It circulated widely and was edited on the basis of a number of manuscripts in the fourteenth century by the Byzantine scholar Judah Ibn Mosconi.[30] The Chronicle of Ahimaas, a chronicle which survives by chance in a single manuscript, demonstrates how fragile the written tradition can be, and no doubt many Jewish works have been lost. There is a stray reference to a lost chronicle of the Byzantine emperors, supposedly written in Greek.[31] We have from various periods letters describing or commenting on contemporary events (a characteristic Byzantine genre), and also some autobiography and memoirs. But even if all this provides some indication of historical interest, we have no historical work of any substance surviving until the voluminous chronicles of Elijah Kapsali, a sixteenth-century Cretan rabbi who owes a great deal to his Italian education.[32]

By comparison with Hebrew writing elsewhere, Byzantium is notable for an interest in apocalyptic. It is relatively short on halakhic (legal) writing, at least among Rabbanites, and *kabbalah*, while by no means lacking, is also limited. Philosophy and science, both favourite Byzantine subjects, find an echo in the Jewish literature, especially in the later period. Grammatical writing does not really arrive until the twelfth century, and secular poetry not before the late fifteenth. Otherwise the interests of Byzantine Hebrew authors can be paralleled elsewhere, although regional variations in interests are very marked throughout the Jewish world.

We do not have much explicit information about the educational system that supported this impressive structure. It is safe to assume that there was a three-tier structure. At the lowest level children learnt to read and write Hebrew and to follow the prayers and the readings from the Pentateuch. The intermediate level probably introduced them to the rest of the Bible and rabbinic law-books. At the highest level the select few mastered the Talmud with its commentaries.[33] To judge from private letters recovered from the Cairo

[29] A key figure is Hillel ben Eliakim of Selymbria, on whom see Ta-Shma, 'R. Hillel'.
[30] *The Josippon*, ed. Flusser; Dönitz, *Überlieferung und Rezeption*.
[31] *JBE*, 166.
[32] Paudice, *Between several worlds.*
[33] De Lange, 'Jewish education'.

Genizah, an ability to read and write Hebrew was relatively widespread. What is more impressive is the number of Byzantine Jews who could compose a liturgical poem, using a highly allusive style and skilfully deploying biblical references. The large number of manuscripts copied in Byzantium, particularly from the early fourteenth century on, also testifies to a substantial learned class. Most of the manuscripts were copied by scholars for their own use.[34]

Throughout the history of Byzantine Judaism, then, the books of the Bible played a central role in the educational syllabus and in the life of the synagogue. It was a common reference-point for the historical, moral and theological ideas that sustained Byzantine Jewish self-identification and discourse, and provided the common ground for polemic and debates between Jews and Christians and between Rabbanites and Karaites. A deep commitment to the Hebrew text of the scriptures determined the choice of Hebrew as the main written language of the Jews, a language that transcended differences between natives and immigrants and between Byzantine Jews and other Jewish communities both neighbouring and far-flung, not only for rabbis but for merchants as well. Yet the mother-tongue and main spoken language of most Byzantine Jews, wherever they lived, remained Greek: this was the language of preaching and teaching as well as daily conversation. As I hope to show in this book, it was in Greek that they learned Hebrew and studied the Hebrew Bible, and when they quoted biblical texts in Hebrew it was the Greek meaning, and even the archaic phraseology of the traditional Greek translations, that they had in their minds.

[34] *Idem*, 'Hebrew scholarship in Byzantium'.

Chapter 3

The ancient Greek translations

Early testimonies

Even if its ultimate beginnings lie further back, Greek-speaking Judaism effectively begins in the Ptolemaic and Seleucid kingdoms formed after the conquests of Alexander the Great in the late fourth century BC. In Ptolemaic Egypt, about which we are best informed, Greek inscriptions dated in the third century BC record the construction of Jewish *proseuchai* or prayer houses.[1] More than a hundred Greek inscriptions and hundreds of papyri illuminate Jewish life in Egypt, which we can also study through surviving Egyptian Jewish writings. We are less well informed, but not completely in the dark, about the Land of Israel, Syria, Asia Minor and Greece, as well as Italy, Gaul and Spain, where colonies of Greek-speaking Jews were established at a later date. Pagan and Christian authors also contribute to the sum of our knowledge. Taking all the evidence together, we can see that, although a small minority overall, Jews came to constitute a significant presence, particularly in the main Greek cities, where they sometimes inhabited their own quarters and were allowed to live under their own laws. In Judaea and adjacent areas they enjoyed political independence under their own rulers from the mid-second to the mid-first century BC, and under Jewish kings imposed by the Romans for some time after that. Here the linguistic situation was complex, with Hebrew still exerting a strong influence; Aramaic was also a vernacular, side by side with Greek. Elsewhere in the regions mentioned, however, it looks as though Greek soon came to be the sole Jewish language. Probably by the first century AD Greek was the only or main language of a majority of Jews in the world; it could be understood by many of the others and could serve as a means of communication between people from different communities. Besides being an administrative and commercial language and a *lingua franca*, for large numbers of Jews it was also the language in which they were educated, the only language they could read and write, and the language of their religious culture.

[1] Horbury and Noy, *Jewish inscriptions*, no. 22 (Schedia, 246–21 BC), no. 117 (Arsinoe-Crocodilopolis, 246–21 BC).

Most of our information about Greek-speaking Judaism in the early centuries comes from Greek Jewish writings preserved in later, often much later, Christian manuscript tradition, or in the form of fragments cited by Christian authors. The quantity of what survives is considerable, for which we must be grateful (the acute lack of such sources after the first Christian century highlights our debt to this Christian transmission), but the means of preservation raises some problems. It is hard for us to judge how typical the literature is, because we only have a vague idea of what is lost. Again, the textual form of what we find in the manuscripts often shows signs of revision by Christian scholars and scribes. This is notoriously the case with the Greek Bible translations themselves, which constitute the core of the evidence with which we are concerned. Ideally we should be able to use these to show us the actual texts used by Jews in antiquity, but the painstaking labours of generations of specialist scholars have revealed a complex process of Christian, and indeed Jewish, revision, so that it is hard to be certain what a Jewish text, at a particular time or place, would have looked like. (This is why the rare ancient fragments, to which we shall return below, are so valuable.) The works of Philo of Alexandria, the most substantial body of extant Greek Jewish literature, furnish precious clues about the text of the ancient Jewish translations, but these works too have been revised, particularly in respect of the biblical quotations. A separate problem is that of dating: Philo is among the handful of ancient Greek Jewish writers who can be dated with some precision. In most cases we have only the most approximate idea of when, and indeed where, the works were written. In some cases specialists cannot even agree on a century.

Despite all these difficulties, and some frustrating gaps in the record, we are in the happy position of being able to reconstruct in broad outline, and often in some detail, what the ancient translations were like, how they were interpreted, and the role they played in Jewish life and culture.

By studying the extant translations we can obtain quite a good idea of what the ancient translations were like. Even though we do not have the Hebrew originals from which they were made, we can get a good sense of the styles of the various translators: some strove to reproduce accurately what was in the Hebrew, at the cost of elegance (sometimes even intelligibility) in Greek; others aimed for a cultivated and fluent Greek style, sometimes introducing rhetorical devices and even lines of verse. A few books (such as Daniel) survive in two different versions. Some books present more subtle or complex situations; for example chapter 3 of Habakkuk exists in two different versions, while the book of Judges has been transmitted in various forms that seem to go back to a single translation that has been successively revised. The book of Reigns (Samuel-Kings in the Hebrew Masoretic Text), as it has been transmitted, is a composite work, made up of sections displaying different approaches to the task of translation. We are thus warned not to imagine that

any version we have was the only one that circulated in antiquity, or that any book has been transmitted in the form that it had in ancient Judaism.

The copious writings of Philo show us some of the ways that the scriptures were read and interpreted. We are fortunate in knowing a certain amount about his life. Born into a prominent Jewish family of Alexandria ca 15 BC, he clearly had an excellent education, and was a prolific author; he died around AD 50. Some fifty of his writings survive, the majority of which are directly devoted to the study of the Greek Pentateuch. These can be grouped under three headings: ten form an exposition of the Law, twenty-one constitute the 'Allegorical Commentary', and another eight the *Questions and Answers* on Genesis and Exodus. In addition, he penned a *Life of Moses*, in two books, which is closely related to our theme. This is not the place to enter into a detailed exposition of his account of the Greek Bible. Suffice it to say that it is almost entirely devoted to the Pentateuch – only rarely does he refer to any other biblical writings. He was a very close and attentive reader of the Pentateuch, and expounded it on various levels and using a variety of exegetical techniques, writing as someone with a Greek education who believed that the principles of Greek thought were compatible with those of Judaism and indeed could all be exemplified in the Pentateuch.

In his *Life of Moses* Philo gives an account of the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek, which offers in interesting insight into how a cultivated Jewish scholar, thinker and teacher two millennia ago saw this foundation-text of his Jewish culture. Originally, he says, the Laws were written in the Chaldean (i.e. Hebrew) language and were therefore only known to the Jews, but eventually, as their fame spread, they were translated into Greek so that non-Jews could also benefit from them. Ptolemy II Philadelphos (reigned ca 282–46 BC), the ruler of Egypt who was third in succession to Alexander the Great, conceived a passionate affection for these laws and decided to have them translated, so he sent to the kingly high priest of Judaea, who dispatched a team of translators to Alexandria to undertake the work. Under divine inspiration, they worked separately yet produced a translation that was verbally the same, and one moreover that was an exact replica in Greek of what was written in the original. A festive gathering was held annually, he says, even in his own day, to celebrate the translation and to thank God for a gift 'so old yet ever young'. This celebration attracts non-Jews as well as Jews, and Philo looks forward to a day when every nation will abandon its own ancestral customs and adopt the Jewish laws.[2] Philo's account is the work of a man who, not knowing Hebrew himself, yet has the highest possible confidence in the Greek translation of the Pentateuch as a perfect reproduction of the original, no less divinely inspired than the original was supposed to be. It thus has a sacred character. He also believes that its teachings are of benefit not only

[2] Philo, *Life of Moses* 2.25–44.

to the Jews but for non-Jews too, so that the translation serves as a bridge between Jews and gentiles. In part, Philo's account is based on an older Greek work that survives independently, the so-called *Letter of Aristeas* or 'Pseudo-Aristeas', which purports to be a personal account written by a non-Jew in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphos, but is now generally agreed to be a pseudepigraphical work written by a Jew in the second century BC, and probably in the second half of the century. However, Philo omits some elements of Ps.-Aristeas and inserts some of his own (or derived from a separate tradition), notably the explicit appeal to divine inspiration and the universalism of outlook that makes the Greek translation a lawbook for all nations, not just the Jews.

Philo is a uniquely rich and authentic source, and we have nothing comparable from before his time (or indeed later). The other Greek Jewish writings (with the exception of the works of Josephus, mentioned below) pose many problems: by contrast to the Philonic corpus they are short, and often fragmentary, their dating (as mentioned above) is uncertain, and we know nothing about their authors and their context in real life.[3] An extreme but illustrative case is Aristoboulos, a Greek Jewish writer of whom some fragments are preserved by Christian authors. He is said to have been a teacher of Ptolemy VI Philometor (reigned 180–145 BC), and to have practised allegorical interpretation of the Greek Pentateuch. On closer inspection, it is hard to have any confidence in anything that is said about him, even perhaps in his very existence.[4] We also have a Greek novel about the romantic encounter between Joseph and his wife, and fragments of a Greek drama on the subject of the Exodus, but we know nothing of when and where they were composed, or for what sort of public, and the same goes for the other Jewish writings in Greek, in all of which biblical texts play some part. Taken together they certainly tend to confirm the centrality of the Pentateuch at least, and particularly the narratives of Genesis and Exodus, in the culture of Greek-speaking Jews.

The writings of the historian Flavius Josephus stand apart from the works just mentioned. In the first place they survive in abundance. The *Jewish Antiquities* rework a substantial part of the historical narratives of the biblical books, and, unlike Philo, Josephus draws freely on books outside the Pentateuch. He displays close knowledge of the scriptures, and of details and embellishments not found in the current texts. Josephus was born and educated in Judaea and spent his mature years in Rome. His testimony therefore provides a valuable counterbalance to that of Philo, who spent virtually all his life in Alexandria. There is no denying that Josephus is an invaluable witness

[3] Van der Horst, 'The interpretation'; Alexandre, 'Le Pentateuque d'Alexandrie'.
[4] See Wasserstein and Wasserstein, *The legend of the Septuagint*, 27–35.

to the place of the Bible in the Judaism of his day.[5] There are, however, serious difficulties related to the interpretation of his evidence. The fact that he spent parts of his life in two places makes it hard to localise his testimony. Again, Greek was not his first language, and he himself says that he acquired it with some difficulty. Probably he knew the scriptures best in Hebrew, and also in Aramaic; Greek came third.

Since we tend to have allusions and re-workings rather than direct citations of the biblical texts, it is hard for us to judge whether the authors knew a single, standard translation or whether a variety of texts circulated. For Philo, this does not seem to be a troubling question: he assumes a standard text even if his quotations do not always agree verbally with the one later transmitted in the main Christian manuscripts. Sometimes the other Greek Jewish writings do seem to quote from variant texts or possibly different translations. Josephus, for example, in some books (from 1 Reigns to 1 Maccabees) uses a text that has similarities to a form of the text that is attested later in Syria (the so-called Lucianic recension), and his citations show some affinities to the later translation ascribed to Symmachos.[6] Ps.-Aristeas argues strongly for the authority of a single text which is said to go back to Ptolemy Philadelphos. It says that at the time the translation was made the Jewish community agreed that a curse should be pronounced on anyone who should revise what had been written by addition, alteration or deletion. This has been interpreted, reasonably enough, as a form of polemic against revised or alternative texts that really existed at the time Ps.-Aristeas was written.

Both Philo and Josephus inform us about how the knowledge and understanding of the Pentateuch was disseminated. Philo mentions meeting-places (συναγώγια, *On Dreams* 2.127), also called schools (διδασκαλεῖα, *Special Laws* 2.62) or places of prayer (προσευκτήρια, *Life of Moses* 2.216), where the Jews gather every seven days to study the laws. He claims that Moses instituted these gatherings so that the Jews would have expert knowledge of their ancestral laws and customs:

> What then did he do? He required them to assemble in the same place on these seventh days, and sitting together in a respectful and orderly manner hear the laws read so that none should be ignorant of them. And indeed they do always assemble and sit together, most of them in silence except when it is the practice to add something to signify approval of what is read. But some priest who is present or one of the elders reads the holy laws to

[5] 'Second only perhaps to his significance as a historian is Josephus' importance for our knowledge of the text and interpretation of the Bible in the first century' (Feldman, 'Use, authority and exegesis', 455).

[6] Mez, *Die Bibel des Josephus*; cf. Thackeray, *Josephus*, 85–8.

them and expounds them point by point till about the late afternoon, when they depart having gained both expert knowledge of the holy laws and considerable advance in piety.[7]

These texts emphasise the importance of the scriptures, specifically the Pentateuch, in Jewish life, and the way that its study became tantamount to a religious rite.[8]

Greek biblical manuscripts surviving from the ancient synagogue are frustratingly few and fragmentary. Moreover, once we reach the Christian era there is disagreement among specialists as to which are Jewish and which are Christian. Robert A. Kraft, who has devoted a long and sustained effort to elucidating this question, has listed two dozen manuscripts that are certainly or possibly Jewish, ranging in date from the second century BC to the end of the third century AD.[9] Some are tiny, a few more substantial. They were preserved in the dry climate of Egypt and the Judaean Desert, so it is impossible to judge how typical they are. They are written on papyrus or parchment, and while most are from scrolls, several of the later fragments come from codices.[10]

The majority of the fragments are from the Pentateuch, as we might expect, but a wide range of other books is represented: Letter of Jeremiah, Minor Prophets, Job, Esther, Psalms. There is also an *ostrakon*, which may be Jewish or Christian, containing part of the Book of Judith. It is important to note that the form of the text (where enough remains for us to judge) is generally similar to that preserved in the much later, Christian, manuscripts on which the modern editions of the Septuagint are based. There are significant variants, however, due in part, at least, to later revisions and accidents of the text.[11] A notable exception to the general trend is the Minor Prophets manuscript found in Nahal Hever, which was mentioned in the Introduction. While this does confirm, by implication, the early prevalence of a Septuagint-type text, it clearly reflects a conscious revision towards a form of Hebrew text different from that underlying the Old Greek, and very close to the one edited, centuries later, by the Masoretes.[12]

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[7] *Hypothetica*, 7.12–13, tr. Colson, *Philo* 9, 431, 433. Cf. Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.175: 'Every week, abandoning all other work, they gather to listen to the Law and learn it by heart'.

[8] On the Bible in the ancient synagogue see further Horbury, 'Biblical interpretation', esp. 292–6.

[9] Kraft, 'The "textual mechanics"'.

[10] These fragments are discussed more fully in Chapter 4.

[11] See, for the fragments from Qumran, the summary in Tov, 'The Greek biblical texts'.

[12] *Ibid*., 116–17. Tov perhaps goes beyond the evidence in designating this a 'proto-rabbinic' text, although it is true that this is the type of Hebrew text cited in the rabbinic literature.

Origen

We should know incomparably less about the Greek translations used by the Jews before the fourth century were it not for the work of the Christian scholar Origen (ca 185–ca 253). Origen was born and brought up in Alexandria, but spent the last twenty years or so of his life in Caesarea Maritima, on the coast of Palestine. A prolific preacher and writer, he devoted much of his scholarly life to the study of the text and interpretation of the Bible.

In the course of his work, Origen took some pains to compare the Greek texts used by Christians with those current among Jews. As he himself puts it, he has not 'shrunk from studying also the scriptures according to the Jews, and comparing all ours with theirs, and observing the differences between them'.[13] This is evidently an allusion to his so-called *Hexapla*,[14] a massive compilation of texts arranged in columns. It is generally thought, following the fourth-century Christian writer Epiphanius, that the first two columns contained respectively a Hebrew text in Hebrew letters and a transcription of that text into Greek letters.[15] The following columns contained respectively the translations attributed to Akylas, Symmachos, the Septuagint and Theodotion, with some further translations added for some biblical books. All these texts were of Jewish origin, but Origen considered the Septuagint and Theodotion to be 'Christian copies'.[16] The order of the columns is puzzling. Pierre Nautin argued that the basis of Origen's compilation was an earlier, Jewish, synopsis containing only the transliterated Hebrew, Akylas and Symmachos, and that Origen himself added the Septuagint followed by Theodotion.[17] Two considerations led Nautin to this conclusion: the place of the Septuagint, and the presence of the transliterated Hebrew column. It is indeed hard to think of any other explanation of the place of the Septuagint, buried

[13] *Letter to Africanus*, 9; cf. *Commentary on John* 6.212 and *Homilies on Jeremiah* 16.5. See de Lange, *La Lettre à Africanus,* 493–5.

[14] Origen does not name the *Hexapla* himself, probably because he considered it as a tool for his work, rather than a book intended for publication. The title is first used by Eusebius, who describes how Origen composed the work (*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.16). See further Nautin, *Origène*, 303–61.

[15] Nautin, *ibid.*, 320, dismisses Epiphanius's testimony, which he maintains is contradicted by that of Eusebius, who was familiar with the copy of the *Hexapla* in Origen's library. In fact Eusebius does say that Origen acquired a text in Hebrew characters preserved by the Jews, and even maintains that he learnt Hebrew, a most implausible assertion: see de Lange, *Origen and the Jews*, 21–3; Ulrich, 'The Old Testament text', 551–6. R. G. Jenkins has attempted to show, on the basis of a Cairo Genizah fragment, that the original *Hexapla* did contain a column in Hebrew characters: 'The first column of the Hexapla'.

[16] *Letter to Africanus*, 4, 6. At *Commentary on John* 6.41, however, he seems to consider Theodotion a 'Jewish copy'.

[17] Nautin, *Origène*, 333–9.

away in the fourth column, rather than in its natural prominent place in the first column. As for the transliterated Hebrew, it is hard to see what purpose it was intended to serve in the *Hexapla*. Origen knew virtually no Hebrew, certainly not enough to transliterate the entire Old Testament himself. He might have commissioned a transliteration from someone who knew Hebrew – but to what end? In his exegetical works he hardly ever has recourse to this column, and on the rare occasions when he does he is liable to misinterpret its evidence.[18] Consequently he probably found it ready-made. For whom would it have been made originally? Presumably for someone who needed to be able to pronounce the Hebrew aloud but was unable to read Hebrew. As Nautin argues, such a person must have been a Jew, not a Christian. The Bible of the Christians was the Septuagint, not the 'proto-Masoretic' Hebrew. The rabbinic movement was attempting to encourage Jews to learn Hebrew, and to use the 'proto-Masoretic' Hebrew text in their liturgical readings and in some other contexts.[19] What finer tool to spread the knowledge of the Hebrew Bible and the Hebrew language than a compendium presenting in parallel columns the Hebrew text, the same text transliterated into Greek letters, the translation of Akylas offering a precise, word-for-word crib to the meaning, and that of Symmachos presenting a more readily intelligible version of Akylas? All Origen had to do, once he had obtained a copy of this Jewish synopsis, was to tack on the 'Christian copies' of the Septuagint and Theodotion, to have a handy reference work in compiling his homilies and commentaries. I find Nautin's argument compelling. Whereas he developed it so as to shed light on Origen's work, I believe it also sheds considerable light on the Jewish use of Greek translations in the third century.

What it primarily underlines is how the early rabbinic movement, while promoting the use of the proto-Masoretic Hebrew, also promoted two Greek translations, those of Akylas and Symmachos. As regards Akylas this is no novelty. He is mentioned with approval and even quoted in the Palestinian rabbinic literature.[20] Symmachos, too, appears in the rabbinic literature, although he is not quoted.[21] Nautin reasons that the original synopsis contained in parallel columns a form of the proto-Masoretic Hebrew text, the transliteration, and Akylas's translation. The author of this first synopsis was very

[18] See the example in de Lange, *La Lettre à Africanus*, 575–6: the Hebrew word for 'woman' in Genesis 2:23 means 'taken', because both 'woman' (אשה) and 'I take' (אשא) are transliterated as εσσα.

[19] See de Lange, 'The revival of the Hebrew language'. See also Smelik, *Rabbis, language and translation*, esp. 89–99.

[20] Veltri, 'Der griechische Targum'; Smelik, *Rabbis, language and translation*, 435–49. This topic is discussed further in Chapter 4.

[21] Barthélemy, 'Qui est Symmaque?'. Cf. van der Kooij, 'Symmachus'. The identification of the translator with Symmachos son of Joseph, the disciple of Rabbi Meir mentioned in the Talmud, was first proposed by Abraham Geiger in 1862.

probably Akylas himself, in which case he was the author not only of the translation but also of the transliteration.[22] As for Symmachos, it seems likely that he made his translation specially for the synopsis. He generally follows Akylas (Nautin argues), replacing words or expressions that seem to him bizarre, sometimes correcting the meaning, and endeavouring to keep the same word order.

It follows from Nautin's account that neither Akylas nor Symmachos intended his translation to be read separately from the Hebrew. Yet this is what happened later, as I shall show, and it has given rise to very severe judgments on Akylas's qualities as a translator. The main characteristics of Akylas's translation, so far as we can judge from the fragments that survive, are a laborious attempt to preserve the word-order of the Hebrew, and to reproduce in Greek certain real or supposed etymological connections between Hebrew words that may have very different meanings, as well as some Hebrew idioms that have no natural place in Greek. These are all typical features of a crib or 'interlinear translation', intended to help learners of a language trying to read a difficult text. The earlier synopsis, like Origen's later one, was presumably arranged with one word or phrase of the Hebrew on each line, so that the user could read across, from left to right or from right to left, from the Hebrew to the Greek or vice-versa. The purpose of the synopsis was to help and encourage Jews who did not know Hebrew, or did not know it well enough, to read and use the scriptures in Hebrew.

Nautin does not speculate on whether the Hebrew columns were originally written to the right or the left of the Greek ones. Either arrangement would be possible. When Origen acquired a copy he may well have used it for a while before adapting it to his needs by adding more Greek columns. When he decided to do so he will have had to have it recopied, and at that point if it was written from right to left he will have had the order of the columns reversed. It stands to reason that he will have probably omitted the column in Hebrew letters, which would have served no real purpose for him and will have made the recopying more difficult and more expensive, as well as taking up valuable space. He then had the texts current in the churches, the Septuagint and Theodotion, copied in further columns on the right. For the book of Psalms he added further Greek columns, one containing a translation he claims to have found at 'the Nikopolis near Aktion' (viz the Nikopolis in Epirus, founded by Octavian to commemorate his victory at Aktion in 31 BC, not the more obvious one in Palestine, the Emmaus of the New Testament that was renamed in Origen's lifetime), and the other a text discovered with some other Hebrew and Greek writings in a jar near Jericho in the reign of

[22] Nautin, *Origène*, 340.

Antoninus (Caracalla) son of Severus (198–217).[23] It is worth remarking that Origen mentions no other translations, and that he has no doubts about the accuracy of the text of Akylas, unlike the Septuagint, of which he deplores the many corruptions in the texts he knows (corruptions that he attempted to emend by comparing with the other columns of the *Hexapla*).[24] In other words, he only had one copy of Akylas. He summarises his view of Akylas in his letter to Julius Africanus: he describes him as 'slaving for the Hebrew wording' (δουλεύων τῇ ἑβραϊκῇ λέξει) and says that he is 'believed by Jews to have interpreted the scripture more ambitiously (φιλοτιμότερον)'. He adds that 'those who are ignorant of the Hebrew language have the habit of using him especially, as being the most successful of all'.[25] In other words, Jews who were ignorant of Hebrew but wished to know what the Hebrew text said regarded Akylas as the most reliable guide (as Origen himself did).

Symmachos is generally considered as a reviser of the Septuagint.[26] According to Nautin's hypothesis he is better understood as a reviser of Akylas. He is certainly not an independent translator, and, in any case, we should probably see Symmachos, like Akylas, as the product of a school or trend in biblical translation.[27] The remains of his translation, however, are so fragmentary that it is hard to say much more about him.[28] Origen says very little about him: he does not even mention his translation in the letter to Julius Africanus, written towards the end of his life.[29]

The next two columns of the *Hexapla* contained the Septuagint and Theodotion, both of which, as we have seen, Origen considered to be Christian texts, even though in reality both were of Jewish origin. The fact that Origen never refers to Jews using the Septuagint has no doubt contributed to the widespread impression that this ancient translation had already fallen out of use by his time. As we shall see, this impression is false. Origen's silence is surprising, and hard to explain. He encountered a range of Jewish belief and practice, in Alexandria and particularly in the later period of his life in Caesarea Maritima, but he took a particular interest in Rabbinic Judaism, and in his writings he sometimes affects ignorance, for polemical reasons, of Judaism in

[23] See *ibid.*, 309–11. There seem to have been additional columns for other books too: this question need not detain us.

[24] *Commentary on Matthew*, 15.14.

[25] *Letter to Africanus,* 4.

[26] 'Symmachus is translating for Hellenized Jews who were not happy with the stylistic approach of the Septuagint, and his task, even though it was translation, was to aspire to a dignified position among the Greek literary authors of his time', Fernández Marcos, '*Non placet Septuaginta*', 41.

[27] *Idem*, 'Símmaco'.

[28] There is a helpful summary in Fernández Marcos, *Introducción*, 133–50.

[29] See de Lange, *La Lettre à Africanus*, 494–5.

the Philonic tradition.[30] He strongly defends the status of the Septuagint as the traditional Old Testament of the Church and as a gift of Providence.[31] Again for polemical reasons, this time arguing against Christian adversaries, he claims, speciously, that his only reason for studying the 'Jewish' translations is for the purpose of debating with Jews.[32] It is not improbable that he knew Jews who used the Septuagint, but chose not to mention the fact. At any rate, he gives us no information about Jewish use of the Septuagint or of Theodotion.

The other translations mentioned by Origen, the one he found at Nikopolis and the other one discovered in a jar near Jericho, must surely both have been Jewish copies, although he does not say so explicitly. The latter was an archaeological discovery, and therefore tells us nothing about translations in current use, but the former, the so-called *Quinta*, was probably a current Jewish copy. It belonged to the so-called *kaige* group of revisions.[33] Origen does not say whether he found it in a synagogue, or a bookshop, or in private hands.

Unfortunately the *Hexapla* of Origen is lost, and only fragments have been preserved. These are enough to give some sense of the character of the various Greek columns, but not enough to satisfy our curiosity about this remarkable scholarly tool.

Taking all the evidence presented in this chapter together, we can form some sense about the Greek translations in use among Jews in the three centuries before our main investigation begins. We can see the strong position occupied by the Septuagint, particularly in the earlier period, but also later, if we can trust the manuscript fragments. At the same time we can observe various attempts to revise the Septuagint, partly to align it to a different Hebrew text, the 'proto-Masoretic' text which won wide favour, particularly in the nascent rabbinic movement, and partly to respond to different aims and styles of translation. The rabbinic movement needed and endorsed Greek translations, and there are reasons specifically to associate the translations of Akylas and Symmachos with this movement. In Rabbinic Judaism the translations played an ancillary role, in schoolroom and synagogue, subordinate to the Hebrew. We know virtually nothing of other types of Judaism and their approach to the biblical text. It is reasonable to suppose that in all of them the scriptures occupied a central place.

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[30] De Lange, *Origen and the Jews*, 41–4.
[31] *Letter to Africanus*, 8.
[32] *Letter to Africanus*, 9. See de Lange, 'The *Letter to Africanus*'.
[33] Barthélemy, *Les Devanciers*, 213–17.

Part 2

The Greek Bible in Byzantine Judaism

Chapter 4

Early Byzantium (4th–7th Centuries)

Historical background

The history of the Byzantine empire begins, by common consent, in the fourth century, either at the beginning of that century with the foundation of Constantinople by the first Christian emperor, Constantine I, or at the end of the century with the division of the Roman empire. This period, sometimes called 'Late Antiquity' or 'Later Roman empire', is marked by a fundamental continuity with the institutions of the previous centuries of Roman rule. What really changed is that, starting with Constantine, Christianity became the state religion. This was a gradual process which, after a brief intermission under the last non-Christian emperor, Julian (360–3), was more or less complete by the end of the fourth century.

After the formal division of the Roman empire between east and west on the death of Theodosius I in 395, Roman emperors continued to rule in both parts until 476. Under the Germanic kingdoms that then took over in the West life continued as before in some respects, and for a while under Justinian I in the sixth century much of the former western empire was again ruled from Constantinople. The latter part of our period is dominated by tensions on the eastern, Persian, frontier. The Sasanian Persians briefly took Syria, Palestine and Egypt in the early seventh century, not long before the final Arab conquest.

Precisely what these various changes meant for the Jewish population is a matter of uncertainty, mainly because of a shortage of direct information. In the course of our period the basic conditions for Jewish life, as embodied in the laws, gradually and ineluctably worsened. Before the establishment of Christianity Judaism had been a legally-recognised religion. Subsequently, while the older protection continued to be recognised by jurists, the status of Judaism was progressively undermined.[1] It is reasonable to suppose that the Christianisation of the institutions of the empire had an effect on everyday Jewish life, but it is not clear what this effect was. Even the discriminatory legislation that is found in the Theodosian and Justinianic lawcodes was not

[1] See Nemo-Pekelman, *Rome et ses citoyens juifs*. See also Mathisen, 'The citizenship and legal status of Jews'; Linder, *The Jews in Roman imperial legislation*.

necessarily implemented, or at least not in a wholesale and predictable way. For example, while the laws prohibit building or rebuilding synagogues, the period of the 4th to 6th centuries was a time of unprecedented synagogue building, at least in Galilee where most excavated synagogues are found.[2]

Jewish communities were very widely distributed throughout the empire. Taking the archaeological and literary sources together, we can see that they were widespread in the towns and villages of Palestine. Elsewhere in the Roman East, Antioch was probably the strongest urban centre,[3] with a continuing presence in cities such as Berytos and Ptolemais. The Jewish population of Constantinople was growing steadily.[4] We hear little about Jews in Asia Minor at this time, but there is no reason to doubt that there were numerous Jewish communities here, some of them very large and locally significant.[5] Alexandria, by far the greatest Jewish community before the catastrophic war of 116/7, was no longer important, although it certainly had a Jewish community.[6] We read in the sources of communities of Jews elsewhere in north Africa, notably in Carthage, the largest city in the western Mediterranean after Rome, and the literary setting of the 7th-century *Doctrina Jacobi.*[7] For the purposes of our subject, there is no particular reason at this period to exclude the Jews of western Europe from our investigation. The extent to which they continued to speak Greek is debatable, but it is clear from inscriptions that they went on using the language for certain purposes, notably on tombstones, well into our period. The inscriptions are most plentiful in Rome,[8] but we also have important catacombs at Venosa and odd inscriptions elsewhere in southern Italy.[9] We even have inscriptions in Greek from Spain.[10] Jews in these lands continued to use Greek on their tombstones long after the Christians had abandoned it, and at a time when many of them clearly knew Latin: it has been plausibly suggested that they did this because

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[2] C.Th. 16.8.22, 25, C.J. 1.9.15, 18 (text and translation in Linder, *The Jews in Roman imperial legislation*, nos 41, 47 and 54). See also Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish society*; Milson, *Art and architecture*.

[3] Kraeling, 'The Jewish community at Antioch'. For the history of this community down to the 4th century see also Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews,* 34–65.

[4] Jacoby, 'The Jews of Constantinople'; cf. Panayotov, 'The synagogue in the Copper Market of Constantinople'.

[5] Notably Sardis, the excavated synagogue of which occupied an imposing city-centre site and underwent successive alterations and repairs at least until the middle of the 6th century: Seager, 'The synagogue and the Jewish community'. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor,* is mainly concerned with an earlier period, but goes down to the 4th century.

[6] Wilken, *Judaism and the early Christian mind.*

[7] Dagron and Déroche, 'Juifs et chrétiens'.

[8] *JIWE* 2.

[9] *JIWE* 1, 60–181.

[10] *Ibid.*, 247–53, 256–9.

it was a sacred language for them, being the language in which the scriptures were read.[11]

The Synagogue

The central institution of the Jewish community was the synagogue (in fact the Greek word συναγωγή can be used for the community as an entity as well as for its meeting place).[12] The origin of the synagogue is not known;[13] by the beginning of our period, in the early fourth century, it is a well-established and familiar institution. Numerous synagogue buildings dating from this time have been excavated, both in the Roman diaspora and, particularly, in Palestine, and we find many references to the synagogue in both Jewish and Christian writings, without any explanation being attached: it was universally acknowledged as *the* Jewish institution. Roman laws throughout our period refer to the synagogues and the officials associated with them.[14] Christian authors mention synagogues, often adding pejorative epithets, and occasionally complain of Christians attending their meetings.[15] Rabbinic texts insist that they be shown respect, even if the Rabbis are not uniformly positive in their attitude to them.

Excavated synagogue buildings are sometimes located within a complex, including various structures interpreted as a meeting or study room, a kitchen and dining hall, and possibly a library.[16]

Yet, for all the abundant documentation, important gaps remain in our knowledge of the function of synagogues and of the activities that were carried on within their walls. It is commonly assumed that they were primarily places for prayer, an assumption that is reinforced by an old Greek name for the synagogue building, προσευχή ('prayer').[17] The institution of public prayer at fixed times is, however, an issue ridden with problems, which do not concern us here.[18] What is beyond doubt is the close association between the synagogue and the public reading and exposition of the sacred scriptures. This association can be traced back a long time; by our period it is clearly evident, from the layout and furnishings of the excavated buildings as well as

[11] Colorni, *L'uso del Greco*, 15–16.

[12] For a discussion of the place of the synagogue in Jewish life see Rajak, 'Synagogue and community'.

[13] See discussion in Levine, *The ancient synagogue,* 19–41.

[14] Linder, *The Jews in Roman imperial legislation*, 69–70, 73–4.

[15] Levine, *The ancient synagogue*, 272–5, Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews*, 75, 79–80.

[16] Levine, *The ancient synagogue*, 271–2.

[17] Levinskaya, 'A Jewish or Gentile prayer house?'; *eadem*, *The Book of Acts*, 207–25.

[18] Levine, *The ancient synagogue*, 151–9.

from written texts. The officials of the synagogue are sometimes referred to as 'guardians' or 'teachers' of the Law (where 'Law' is to be understood as a name for the Pentateuch[19]), and the place in which the holy books were kept is called νομοφυλάκιον ('Law-guarding place') in an inscription in the synagogue of Sardis.[20]

The holy books were kept at first in a portable chest (תבה in Hebrew, κιβωτός in Greek), and carried into the synagogue as they were needed.[21] This arrangement had become exceptional by the beginning of our period, and the excavated synagogues generally have some kind of fixed arrangement, in the form of a platform or shrine. It has been suggested that the apse, which became a common architectural feature of synagogues in our period, was used to house the books.[22]

All the evidence points, then, to a reading of the scriptures being a prominent – perhaps the most prominent – feature of the ritual of the synagogue. The language of the reading is a question which it is not possible to answer definitely in the present state of the evidence, and probably practice varied from place to place. It would seem that in most places in the empire during our period the reading was conducted in Greek.[23] That the reading was not given in Hebrew is indicated, in a negative fashion, by the almost complete absence of any indication of a knowledge of the language in the Byzantine diaspora. On the positive side, we have a substantial number of inscriptions from synagogues, which are all in Greek except in Palestine, where Aramaic and Hebrew are also used, sometimes side by side with Greek.[24]

The Rabbis of Palestine strongly encouraged the use of Hebrew, which they called 'the language of the Sanctuary' (לשון הקודש).[25] They tolerated

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[19] A law of Constantine I of 330 grants exemption from the burdens of civic obligations to those communal functionaries who '. . . preside over the Law itself' *(legi ipsi praesident)* (C.Th. 16.18.2, Linder no. 9, pp. 132–8; Nemo-Pekelman, *Rome et ses citoyens juifs,* 37-42). In fifth-century Minorca the leading Jew, Theodore, who enjoyed the immunity just mentioned, is referred to as *legis doctor*, 'teacher of the Law' (Severus of Minorca, *Letter on the conversion of the Jews*, ed. Bradbury, 6.2.85). A Greek inscription from 3rd–4th-century Rome (*JIWE* 2, 307) commemorates a 'teacher of the Law' (νομοδιδάσκαλος).

[20] *IJO* 2, no. 129. Cf. Seager, 'The synagogue and Jewish community', 171.

[21] Levine, *The ancient synagogue*, 327–32; Milson, *Art and architecture*, 116–24, 127–40.

[22] Levine, *The ancient synagogue*, 331–2; Milson, *Art and architecture*, 205–29.

[23] This is not the place to investigate the use of Latin translations in the West, on which see the remarks of Colorni, *L'uso del greco*, 57–60.

[24] The Greek inscriptions are collected by Lifshitz, *Donateurs et fondateurs*. Lifshitz gives 102 inscriptions, ranging as far afield as Spain. The latest is dated 604/5, and comes from Ascalon. The language question is discussed very thoroughly by Colorni, *L'uso del greco*; see also de Lange, 'The Hebrew language in the European Diaspora', 111–37.

[25] See de Lange, 'The revival of the Hebrew language', 342–58.

the use of Greek translations, however, even while according them a status secondary to that of the Hebrew.[26] A rabbinic statement preserved in the Palestinian Talmud says that Greek is the only language into which Scripture can be adequately translated;[27] another recalls the lavish praise bestowed by various famous early Rabbis on Akylas's Greek translation.[28] Such rabbinic texts, and others which quote Greek renderings of biblical words attributed to Akylas,[29] support the view that his translation was not only accepted by the Rabbis but was studied and taught by them. This translation had the great advantage, from the point of view of champions of the Hebrew, that it was closer to the Hebrew text then in general use than any other Greek translation. It also respected the grammar of Hebrew, to the point that it has been described as a tool for learning Hebrew.[30] It is a plausible supposition (although impossible to prove) that in synagogues of Greek-speaking Jews where the reading of Scripture in Hebrew had begun to take hold under rabbinic influence, Akylas's translation was read out after the Hebrew reading, as a kind of *targum*, and was cited in Greek prayers and homilies. Whether Akylas's translation was read aloud in the absence of a Hebrew reading we cannot say: we have no direct testimony on the question. On the face of it it seems unlikely, since this version follows the Hebrew so closely that it is all but incomprehensible without it. It is possible to imagine that Greek-speaking Jews who had learnt Hebrew and studied the Hebrew Bible from an early age using this translation,[31] or even, not knowing Hebrew themselves, had been taught and preached to by teachers who had so used it, would be attached to it and so

[26] This question is fully discussed in a series of articles by Smelik, 'The rabbinic reception of early Bible translations'; 'Language, locus, and translation between the Talmudim'; 'Code-switching', 141–7. See also his *Rabbis, language and translation in Late Antiquity*.

[27] Y. *Meg*.1.9(8) (10b).

[28] Y. *Meg*.1.11 (71c); Y. *Qid*.i.1 (59a).

[29] See the traditions about Akylas preserved in Midrash Tanhuma, ed. Buber, *Mishpatim* 3, discussed by Silverstone, *Aquila and Onkelos*, 25–6 and by Veltri, *Libraries*, 170–2, who also collect other rabbinic traditions about Akylas.

[30] 'If the LXX has all the characteristics of a schoolboy's construe, Aquila in his turn may be described as a colossal crib', Burkitt, 'Aquila', 215; 'One could perhaps express the purpose of Aquila's edition as one of providing a guide in Greek *to the Hebrew*', Barr, 'St Jerome's appreciation of Hebrew', 285 n.1; 'The puzzling features of Aquila begin to make sense if Aquila is not seen as a free-standing translation, to be read in isolation, but as a crib to *help* students to understand the Hebrew Bible', Alexander, 'How did the Rabbis learn Hebrew?', 83–4.

[31] The process is described by Theodoret, *Questions on Genesis*, 61, ed. Fernández Marcos and Sáenz-Badillos, 57: after describing Hebrew as a sacred language (ἱερὰ φωνή) which is not acquired naturally but learned, he explains that Jewish children do not use it from an early age, but speak the local language; later, in their teens (μειράκια γενόμενα), they are taught the letters of the alphabet and, through the letters, the holy Scripture.

familiar with its style and vocabulary that they would read it, and be capable of following the public reading, even if, for one reason or another, their synagogue did not offer a Hebrew reading.[32]

In Greek-speaking synagogues where the practice of reading the Hebrew text had not yet taken hold, however, we may reasonably doubt that Akylas's translation would have been popular. Here we may imagine that the antiquity and prestige of the Septuagint will have made it the first choice. The principal disadvantage of the Septuagint was that it was based on a different Hebrew text from that favoured by the Rabbis in Palestine, and perhaps also in other circles that read the Scriptures in Hebrew.[33] This consideration is unlikely to have troubled communities that had always been attached to the Septuagint and were ignorant of, or indifferent to, the growing interest in the 'proto-Masoretic' Hebrew text. Any communities that were sensitive on this score and wanted to move closer to this Hebrew text while retaining the reading in Greek had other translations available, such as those of Theodotion or Symmachos, which combined a general loyalty to the language of the Septuagint with an acknowledgment of the 'proto-Masoretic' Hebrew and, in the case of Symmachos, an elegant Greek style.

It is commonly assumed that in synagogues everywhere the Pentateuch was read from a scroll. This is a point that is not discussed in Jewish or Christian sources, from which we may deduce that it was not considered important. Had the use of scrolls been ritualised, as it was later in both Rabbinic Judaism and Karaism, we would have expected to find it discussed in the Talmud. The scroll had begun to give way to the codex format for Greek texts by the 2nd century, and by the 4th century the codex had become the normal format.[34] That scrolls were used in synagogues, not only in Palestine but even in the West, can be deduced from pictorial representations.[35] The earliest extant Hebrew codex dates from the 8th century, and has a rather primitive appearance,[36] which tends to confirm the claim that Hebrew-using circles remained attached to the older scroll format, against the general trend. But what of Greek readings: were they performed from a scroll or a codex? On this we have no reliable information. A number of Greek Bible manuscript fragments from our period that have been thought to be Jewish have the codex format

[32] E.g. because they possessed no Hebrew text, or had no one able to read the Hebrew. See Smelik, 'Code-switching', 125.

[33] We know nothing about such circles – not even whether they existed. We may note, however, that in later times the Karaites were attached to the same 'proto-Masoretic' text, and it is possible that they received it by a tradition independent of the Rabbis.

[34] Resnick, 'The codex in early Jewish and Christian communities', 1–17; Blanchard, *Les Débuts du codex*.

[35] E.g. Fine, *Sacred realm*, 64, 87.

[36] Sirat, *Hebrew manuscripts of the Middle Ages*, 35; *eadem*, *Les papyrus en caractères hébraïques trouvés en Egypte*.

(see below), but even if we could be certain that they are indeed Jewish we cannot be sure that they were used for public reading rather than private study (if indeed that distinction can be applied to the context of the synagogue). It is therefore prudent to retain an open mind on the question.

From rabbinic texts it is clear that the main focus of reading and study was the Torah, i.e. the Pentateuch. The entire Torah was read in prescribed segments on successive Sabbaths, over a period of three to three and a half years.[37] Each weekly reading was followed by a short extract from the Prophetic Books (*haftara*).[38] All the information relates to Hebrew readings, and by implication to Greek translations used in association with them.[39] The practice in Greek synagogues that did not use Hebrew at all is completely unknown. There is a reasonable presumption that they read the Pentateuch, which by tradition going back to the origins of Greek-speaking Judaism was considered the sacred Scripture *par excellence*.[40] We know nothing, though, of how it was read, for example whether it was cantillated or chanted or simply read out, or how often, or when, or whether there was a fixed cycle of readings. There is no evidence at all concerning prophetic readings: Christian Bibles from our period have a different structure from the threefold division (Torah – Prophets – Writings) attested for Hebrew Bibles and exploited in rabbinic homiletics, but we do not know which books were considered prophetic by Greek Jews. Nor do we have much information about the cycle of festivals observed in Greek synagogues.[41]

Apart from formal readings, we have indications that some scriptural texts, notably the Psalms, were chanted or sung liturgically. Inscriptions from as far apart as Rome and Asia Minor attest to the office of 'Reciter of psalms' (ψαλμῳδός or ψαλμολόγος)[42] in Jewish communities, and it is reasonable to assume that the reference is to the recitation of biblical psalms.

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[37] Levine, *The ancient synagogue*, 506–7.

[38] *Ibid*., 142–3. Levine observes (539) that the choice of prophetic reading varied from synagogue to synagogue.

[39] A few rabbinic texts can be taken as referring to the practice where there is no Hebrew reading, e.g. Y. *Meg*.4.3 (75a), 'Non-Hebrew-speakers do not follow this custom. . .'.

[40] See Hadas-Lebel, 'Qui utilisait la LXX dans le monde juif?'

[41] In 4th-century Antioch John Chrysostom mentions the major festivals: New Year, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles, Passover (see Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews*, 64, 66–8). We should bear in mind that different Jewish communities followed different calendars at this time, and might observe festivals like Passover on different dates: Stern, *Calendar and Community*, esp. 85–98; *idem*, 'Jewish calendar reckoning in the Graeco-Roman cities', esp.115.

[42] Ψαλμῳδός*: JIWE* 2, 502 (Rome): this person is also described on his funerary inscription as γραμματεύς (scribe) and φιλόνομος (lover of the Law); ψαλμο(λόγος): *IJO* 2, no. 14, face A l. 15 (Aphrodisias; the second half of the word has been supplied).

Various titles of offices related to the synagogue are known from inscriptions and other sources; most of these seem to have been honorific or purely administrative. 'Teacher of the Law' (νομοδιδάσκαλος) has been reconstructed in an inscription in Rome;[43] the 'Law' in question is presumably the Torah. Διάκονος ('attendant') is glossed by the Semitic-sounding title ἀζζανά;[44] in rabbinic texts the *hazzana* (or *hazana*, in Aramaic; in Hebrew *hazzan* or *hazan*) is a relatively menial functionary who organises the prayer meetings, assigning seats, choosing readers, or giving the signal for responses. None of the titles seems to indicate a regular reader, which suggests that one of those assembled might be asked to read, and thus that the ability to read was not uncommon. Some training for this purpose must be assumed, but we have no means of telling how widespread it was. Study of the Law is singled out for honourable mention in funerary inscriptions.[45]

Justinian's Novel 146

It is generally recognised that a key testimony on the language of scriptural readings in the synagogue is a law of Emperor Justinian, Novel 146. However, very different interpretations of this document have been put forward. I should like to revisit this novel now, in its historical context, and see if it can tell us anything new about our subject.

Novel 146 of Justinian, issued on 8 February 553, is addressed to the Praetorian Prefect of the East, Areobindos. The text has come down to us in Greek and in Latin translation.[46] The Latin text has the heading 'That the Hebrews may read the sacred Scriptures according to tradition, in Latin or Greek or another language; and that those who do not believe in the Judg-

[43] *JIWE* 2, 307. The term is found in the New Testament (Luke 5:17, Acts 5:34, 1 Tim 1:7; Synesios, bishop of Ptolemais, applies it, perhaps ironically, to a ship's pilot (*Ep.* 5): it was clearly a well-known Jewish title by the late 4th century. A little later, as we have seen, the Latin equivalent, *doctor legis*, is found in the letter of Severus of Minorca. The title σοφοδιδάσκαλος (wise teacher or teacher of wisdom) is found in Sardis (*IJO* 2, no. 63).

[44] *IJO* 3, no. Syr58 (Apamea, dated 392). The title *azanas* is also found in an inscription from Caesarea: see the discussion *ibid.*, pp. 99–100. Cf. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30.11, where the similar but Hellenised title *azanita* is glossed as διάκονος or ὑπηρετής.

[45] Eusebius the teacher (διδάσκαλος) is described as νομομαθής (a student of the Law) in *JIWE* 2, 68 (Rome). Cf. *ibid.*, 270, 374, 390.

[46] *Corpus Juris Civilis* 3, eds Schroell and Kroll, 714–18, reprinted at the end of Rabello, *Giustiniano* 2 (unnumbered pages), with an extensive introduction and bibliographical references, *ibid.*, 814–28. Greek text only with English translation, Linder, ed., *The Jews in Roman imperial legislation*, 402–11.

ment, the Resurrection or that angels are created be expelled from their places'. The Greek text is simply headed 'On the Hebrews' (περὶ Ἑβραίων).

The key sections for our purpose read as follows:[47]

(Preamble) The Hebrews, hearing the holy books, ought not to cling to the bare letters, but should look to the prophecies contained in them, through which they announce the great God and Saviour of the human race, Jesus Christ; although they surrender themselves to irrational interpretations and even now still err from the true belief, yet, having learned that they are divided by doubts, we did not continue to leave them in unresolved turmoil. For from the very pleas that were laid before us we learned that, while one party only accept the Hebrew language and wish to use it in the reading of the holy books, the other party consider it proper also to use[48] Greek, and that they have been in conflict about this for a long time. We, having learned of this, ruled in favour of those who wish to use the Greek language also for the reading of the holy Books, and any language whatsoever that the location renders more appropriate and more familiar to the audience.

(Chapter 1) We therefore ordain that wheresoever there are Hebrews, those Hebrews who so wish shall have licence to read the holy books in their synagogues to the congregation through the medium of the Greek language before those assembled and comprehending, or indeed the ancestral tongue (we speak of the Italian [language]),[49] or any other, as language and reading vary from place to place, so that what is read may be clear to all the congregation in due order, and that they may live and behave accordingly; and their exegetes shall not have the freedom, by using Hebrew alone, to abuse this at their will, making the ignorance of the public into a cloak for their own malice; provided that those who read in Greek shall use the traditional text of the Septuagint, which is the most accurate and most highly approved . . .; but so that we may not be thought to prohibit the other translations, we give them permission also to use that of Akylas, even though he was of foreign race and differs considerably from the Septuagint in certain words. But we absolutely forbid what they call the *deuterôsis* (δευτέρωσις), as it is neither contained in the holy Books nor handed down by tradition from the Prophets, but is an invention of men speaking from the earth alone and having nothing divine in them; and let them read the holy words themselves, unrolling[50] the actual books, but not concealing what is said in them and using instead extraneous unwritten nonsense contrived by themselves for the perdition of the simpler folk. Thus, since this licence has been granted by us, those who use Greek and the other languages shall not be subjected to any penalty whatever, nor shall they be hindered by anybody at all; nor shall their so-called *archipherekitai* (ἀρχιφερεκίται), elders or teachers have licence to hinder this by means of any sophistries or anathemas, unless they wish to be chastened by corporal punishment and additionally by confiscation of their possessions, and so submit unwillingly to what we will and command, being better and more pleasing to God.

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[47] I have translated from the Greek text.

[48] On the meaning of παραλαμβάνειν, which occurs several times in the Novel, see Colorni, *L'uso del greco*, 51 n. 222; Lanata 'Aliud vates, aliud interpres', 121–2, states that the correct reading is clearly παραλαμβάνειν, not προσλαμβάνειν, and the meaning is that they wanted to use Greek also, not *in addition to* but *instead of* the Hebrew.

[49] Justinian was born in a Latin-speaking village in the Balkans.

[50] This points to the use of scrolls in the synagogue, discussed above.

This remarkable text, unique in the whole of Roman law in its subject and in its policy towards the Jewish minority, has long been recognised as an important document in relation to the Jewish use of Greek Bible translations. In the words of Vittore Colorni, 'It is like a lamp that lights up, for a few moments, a deep and very long night'.[51] Centuries of erudition have, however, yielded no consensus on what lessons to draw from it.

Virtually the only point that is undisputed is the date (553). The place where the dispute divided the Jewish community is not specified. Some commentators have thought, plausibly enough, of Constantinople,[52] but since no place is mentioned it may well have been a more widespread problem. The mention of Latin might be taken to suggest that it had spread to the West, where Greek was giving way to Latin, and where some traces of Latin biblical translations have been discerned.[53] However, our rescript is addressed to the Praetorian Prefect of the East, and therefore probably responds to eastern concerns.[54]

One fundamental question is how much trust we can place in the *Sitz im Leben* put forward in the Preamble, viz that the emperor was responding to turmoil arising from a deep and longstanding division within the Jewish community, and to pleas (προσελεύσεις) submitted to him by the rival parties. Giuseppe Veltri has suggested that Justinian invented the internal Jewish conflict as a pretext for intervening in the prayer-life of the Jewish communities with a view to converting them to Christianity.[55] I agree with Willem Smelik[56] and others that this is an unlikely scenario, and prefer to follow the legal expert, Giuliana Lanata,[57] who insists that there can be no doubt that the

[51] 'È come un lampo che illumina, per pochi istanti, una notte profonda e lunghissima', Colorni, *L'uso del greco*, 2. Colorni traces the history of the question, starting from John Lightfoot and Richard Simon in the 17th century.

[52] Baron, *SRHJ* 3, 11, refers to the 'ever turbulent Jewish factions of Constantinople'. So van Bekkum, 'Jewish Messianic Expectations in the age of Heraclius', 100. *Contra*, Solomon Grayzel, 'The Jews and Roman Law', 102: 'It is a pity that we are not told which community or communities were involved. It was probably not a community in Palestine; and may have been in southern Italy or Sicily or one of the Mediterranean islands'. Lanata, 'Aliud vates' 120–1, thinks that Palestine should be ruled out; she wonders whether Alexandria might be a possibility.

[53] Rabello, *Giustiniano*, 820, thinks specifically of Rome. While Latin was very much alive in sixth-century Constantinople, not only in the circles of the ruling, Orthodox, elite but also among immigrants and traders, we hear nothing about Latin-speaking synagogues. Their existence can certainly not be ruled out.

[54] I am grateful for helpful advice on this point to Denis Feissel, who also suggests that if Latin-speaking Jewish communities in Italy or Africa had presented similar petitions a separate Latin redaction of the Law would have had to be issued for them.

[55] Veltri, 'Die Novelle 146 περὶ Ἑβραίων'.

[56] Smelik, 'Justinian's Novella 146 and contemporary Judaism'.

[57] Lanata, 'Aliud vates', 119.

Novel originated in a request for intervention from a conflict-riven Jewish community. Leonard Rutgers has argued that the Novel cannot be taken at face value, and cannot be used as evidence for arguments within the Jewish community about the language in which the Torah was to be read in synagogues. He questions whether Justinian 'would have been bothered by an issue that divided the Jewish community internally', and also whether 'Jews would have approached Justinian with the issue that Justinian maintains bothered them' (388). Justinian's real purpose, he maintains, was to eliminate the Hebrew language, for purely Christian purposes.[58] I do not find the argument that the setting is a fiction, and therefore of no historical value as regards Jewish Bible reading, convincing; on the other hand I see no reason to dispute the idea that the Emperor may have exploited such a division for ends inimical to the Jews, as Alfredo Rabello[59] and others have insisted. István Perczel has suggested that the mind behind the Novel is that of Theodore Askidas (Justinian's chief ecclesiastical advisor), whom he also identifies as the author of the anti-Jewish *Questions and Answers* that have been transmitted under the name of Kaisarios.[60] I have no argument with this approach, which delves beyond the text into the theological politics of the imperial chancery.

The Novel speaks of a long-standing conflict between the partisans of a reading in Hebrew *alone* and those who want a reading in Greek. The wording in the Preamble has been taken by some to imply that the latter want a Greek translation *in addition* to a Hebrew reading. This question has been carefully discussed by Colorni, and I believe it is hard if not impossible to escape his conclusion that the question is one of Greek or Hebrew, not both.[61]

Some have seen the Hebrew faction as the custodians of tradition, resisting an attempt by Hellenizers to replace the Hebrew language by Greek.[62] In view of the general trend, which was the replacement of Greek by Hebrew and not vice-versa, we should undoubtedly see the Hellenist party as the traditionalists, and the Hebraists as the innovators.[63]

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[58] Rutgers, 'Justinian's Novella 146 between Jews and Christians'.

[59] Rabello, *Giustiniano*, 817.

[60] Perczel, 'Finding a place for the *Erotapokriseis* of Pseudo-Caesarius'.

[61] Colorni, *L'uso del Greco,* 51. Colorni argues that the disagreement cannot have been about such a minor question as an *additional* reading in Greek, pointing out (n. 221) that even the Rabbis permitted a translation into Aramaic. Denis Feissel, in a private communication, expresses the matter succinctly: 'Les hellénistes, me semble-t-il, n'ont pas demandé à utiliser le grec en plus de l'hébreu, mais au même titre que d'autres utilisent l'hébreu, et l'empereur leur a donné gain de cause'.

[62] E.g. Baron, *SRHJ* 3, 12; see the discussion by Rabello, *Giustiniano,* 2.816.

[63] So Simon, *Verus Israel*, 350 and n. 2 (301 and n. 152 in the English translation). The question is expounded at length by Colorni, *L'uso del greco*. See also de Lange, 'The Hebrew language'.

The Emperor mentions approaches or petitions (προσελεύσεις) [64] from the parties, and it is reasonable to suppose that the drafting of the Novel picks up some of the language of the Jewish claim and counter-claim. This is an aspect of the Novel that has not, so far as I am aware, been examined before.[65]

While there is much in the Novel that is reminiscent of traditional Christian rhetoric, such as the repeated hostile references to the 'bare letters' of Scripture and the miraculous claims advanced in favour of the Septuagint (omitted in my quotation),[66] there are a number of curious details which may be best explained by reference to the claims of the petitioners. The following points seem to me to originate in the demands of the Hellenist faction:[67]

1. The phrase 'the traditional text' (παράδοσις) of the Septuagint involves an appeal to tradition that would suit a document claiming that innovators were attempting to introduce unacceptable changes. A key point in the Hellenists' plea is thus that they want to keep up the traditional reading of the Septuagint.[68]

2. The unfounded claim that the Septuagint is the most accurate translation is as likely to be a Jewish as a Christian one. It can only have issued sincerely from someone who was incapable of comparing it with the Hebrew.[69] Christian biblical scholars such as Origen and Eusebius had considered Akylas to be a more accurate translation than the Septuagint, and sometimes categorise a Septuagint reading as inferior to that of another translation.

3. The mention of Akylas' having been 'of foreign race' (ἀλλόφυλλος) does not make sense from a Christian viewpoint. Rabbinic writings refer to him as 'the proselyte', and the best explanation of the phrase here is that it was part of the Hellenists' objection to the use of his translation.

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[64] On the meaning of προσέλευσις see Lanata, 'Aliud vates', 119–20.

[65] On the relationship between petition and rescript, see Feissel, 'Pétitions'.

[66] Two miraculous claims are put forward: that the translators were separated in pairs, yet produced a single version, and that they predicted the coming of Christ. The division of the translators into thirty-six pairs is found in Epiphanius and the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* (Wasserstein and Wasserstein, *The legend of the Septuagint*, 117, 128); in Jewish tradition they were lodged in seventy-two separate cells. It is worth considering whether the separation in pairs mentioned here was a genuine Jewish argument and formed part of the Hellenists' plea.

[67] Rabello, *Giustiniano* 816, supposes that it was the Hellenists who turned to the Emperor and I see no reason to dissent. However, it is likely that the Hebraists too submitted their case.

[68] This point is well understood by Wasserstein and Wasserstein, *The legend of the Septuagint*, 63. Several writers on the Novel have tried to argue that the Emperor was trying to force the unwilling Jews to adopt the Septuagint, but there is no evidence that its use had died out among Jews at this time.

[69] It is not impossible, but in the absence of any corroborative evidence unlikely, that Greek-speaking Jews had kept up a knowledge of the Hebrew underlying the Septuagint.

4. The other objection to Akylas, that he 'differs considerably from the Septuagint', is also likely to have originated in the Hellenists' plea. If we follow the logic of this argument, the Hellenists will have distanced themselves from the translation of Akylas, which is mentioned favourably in rabbinic writings. (This is an important point, because the Novel has often been cited as evidence that Akylas's translation was read in synagogues at this time. That may well have been the case, but I take it, on the contrary, as evidence that Akylas was not in use everywhere, and that there was very strong opposition to its introduction.) The Hellenists were so deeply attached to the Septuagint that they resented the use of any Greek translation that differed from it, as that of Akylas decidedly did.

5. The hostile allusion to the 'malice' (κακοήθεια) of the exegetes (who misrepresent the Hebrew, taking advantage of the ignorance of the congregation) seems naturally to be part of the complaint of the Hellenists. To attribute it to a Christian lawyer would be rather forced.

6. The complaint that the δευτέρωσις, which is to be identified broadly with the Oral Torah of the Rabbis,[70] 'is neither contained in the holy books nor handed down by tradition from the Prophets, but is an invention of men speaking from the earth alone and having nothing divine in them', is reminiscent of the later polemic of the Karaites.[71] In other words it is a perfectly plausible Jewish argument, and there is no reason to seek a Christian origin for it, even if some precedents can be found in the New Testament and other early Christian writings. Its likeliest source is the plea of the Hellenists.

7. The 'so-called *archipherekitai*' are not mentioned in any other Roman legal source, or indeed anywhere else in the literature. It has been suggested that the term is based on the Aramaic title *resh pirqa.*[72] It certainly does not seem to belong to the western, Greek-speaking synagogue, and since it is not otherwise attested in the laws it was probably taken from the plea of the Hellenists. The other two titles mentioned alongside it, πρεσβύτεροι (elders) and διδάσκαλοι (teachers) are familiar Greek terms, and one of them, πρεσβύτερος, is explicitly associated with Greek synagogues in the inscriptions.[73] They may have been used by the Hellenists in their deposition, or they may have been inserted by a member of the imperial chancery, to ex-

[70] Rabello, *Giustiniano*, 821 n.16; Veltri, *Libraries*, 167.

[71] Baron, *SRHJ* 5, 272, suggests that the view expressed in the Novel may actually have fed into Karaism.

[72] See Gutmann, 'Archipherekites'.

[73] See Panayotov, 'Jewish communal offices'. The διδάσκαλοι are omitted in the Epitome of the Novels by Athanasios of Emesa, ed. Linder, p. 36; cf. the identical wording in the *Collectio Tripartita*, *ibid*., 57. The abridgment by Theodoros Hermopolitanus has a lacuna at the relevant point; the extant text only mentions the διδάσκαλοι (*ibid.,* 33). These later sources all belong to the latter part of the 6th century.

plain and soften the impact of the unfamiliar and barbarous term *archipherekitai*.

The most important point for our subject to emerge from this argument is that, if my reading is correct, we can hear from behind the language of the Roman lawyers the authentic voice of the Hellenist party, protesting at the attempt to displace their time-honoured practice of reading the scriptures in Greek by innovators who want to replace it by a reading in Hebrew as well as a rabbinic-style exposition (δευτέρωσις).

We can hear their complaints, partly in their own words. They accuse the Hebraists of 'malice' (κακοήθεια) in wanting to overturn tradition and deceive the congregation by reading the scripture in a language they cannot understand, or perhaps in a non-standard Greek translation made by a gentile. They also want to introduce an exposition that is non-scriptural and entirely a human creation. It seems that their 'so-called *arkipherekitai*' try to impose these innovations by means of περίνοιαι (over-clever, hair-splitting arguments, or perhaps sharp practices) and ἀναθεματισμοί (curses, or threats of excommunication).

Contrary to what one might perhaps have imagined, the Hellenists did not want *any* translation, but specifically the Septuagint. This may seem surprising to those brought up on the traditional scenario, that the Jews had voluntarily abandoned the Septuagint in the early second century, after it had been adopted by the Christians, but I do not see any other way to explain the wording of the Novel. The Emperor, in permitting Akylas, explicitly dismisses two objections to this translation, and it seems to me that these objections must have issued from the Hellenist party. There is no reason for them to have come from the Emperor's Christian advisors.[74]

The Novel not only sheds light on the Hellenist faction, it tells us quite a lot about the Hebraists as well. I have suggested that the toleration accorded to the translation of Akylas, despite the hostility of the Hellenists, is a concession to the Hebraist party. Now it has often been remarked that the Palestinian Talmud maintains that this translation was made for and approved by the leading Rabbis of his day. The Rabbis also commend him as an exceptionally scrupulous proselyte, perhaps with an apologetic motive. [75] Hence the reference to Akylas provides a hint that the Hebraists are devotees of the Rabbis of Palestine.[76] The mention of *archipherekitai* may be another such

[74] Unless we imagine some sort of complex anti-Origenism to be at work here, as envisaged by Perczel, 'Finding a place'. But the debate over Origen at the time concerned his theological beliefs rather than the quality of his biblical scholarship.

[75] Smelik, *Rabbis, language and translation*, 435–7.

[76] Note, however, some indications that Akylas's translation was used, earlier than this time, outside rabbinic circles. E.g. the presence of quotations from Akylas within sections identified as having a Jewish origin in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, a Christian work

hint. But what is surely decisive is the use of the word δευτέρωσις, a term which is closely associated with the rabbinic movement.[77] Taken together this evidence points clearly to a rabbinic initiative behind the attempt to impose a Hebrew reading in the West.

There is another point worth mentioning. In a passage I have omitted, the Emperor firmly bans such 'ungodly nonsense' as the denial of the Resurrection or Judgment, or the belief that angels are not the work and creation of God. All the beliefs in question, in Resurrection, Judgment, and the creation of angels, which are characteristic of Rabbinic Judaism, are contained in the Oral, not the Written, Torah. It is impossible to know whether it was the Hellenists who had protested that the Hebraists maintained them contrary to the witness of the holy books, or whether it was the Hebraists who had accused the Hellenists of denying them: either way, in this point at least the Christian emperor was clearly happy to side with the δευτέρωσις.

In conclusion, I believe that this legal text deserves to be taken seriously as affording a glimpse not just into the process by which the proponents of Rabbinic Judaism strove, by fair means and foul, to spread their message and practices among the Jewish communities of the Roman empire, but into the mind-set of the traditionally-minded Jews and the arguments they marshalled in resisting this radical change.

Greek Bible quotations in Jewish inscriptions

We turn now from the indirect testimony of literary sources about the use of Greek Bible translations in the early Byzantine synagogue to the direct testimony of contemporary remains of such translations. These are of two sorts: quotations in inscriptions, and actual biblical manuscripts in Greek.

Inscriptions provide a great deal of information about Jewish life in Late Antiquity. They have some advantages in common with manuscripts: they are original artefacts, not texts transmitted by a succession of fallible scribes; they are generally localised, and they are often our only source of information about the Jewish community in a particular locality; and they often refer to subjects that are not mentioned in literary sources. But they also raise problems of dating and interpretation, and in many cases we cannot even be cer-

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compiled probably in Syria in the latter part of the 4th century: see Simon, *Verus Israel*, 76–7, 81 (English translation 55–6, 59).

[77] On the meaning of this Jewish term, now attested only in Christian writings, see de Lange, *Origen and the Jews*, 34–5. See, for example, Jerome, *Ep*. 121 (CSEL 56.48): *traditiones pharisaeorum . . . quas hodie* δευτερώσεις *uocant.* This letter also says of the Palestinian Rabbis, *doctrinas hominum praeferentes doctrinae dei*, a phrase echoed in the Novel.

tain that we are dealing with a Jewish inscription.[78] Despite all the difficulties, we cannot ignore their testimony. Although we have large numbers of Jewish inscriptions in Greek from various parts of the Mediterranean basin, we have very few direct biblical quotations in Greek Jewish inscriptions.[79] The one particularly well-represented example is the quotation of Prov 10:7 ('the memory of the righteous for a blessing') in funerary inscriptions.[80] There is a substantial difference between the translations of LXX and Akylas: LXX has μνήμη δικαίων μετ' ἐγκωμίων, while Akylas, closer to the Hebrew of the MT, has δικαίου in the singular, and εἰς εὐλογίαν (also in the singular) instead of μετ' ἐγκωμίων.[81] We do not know how Akylas translated Hebrew זכר ('memory') here.

Three inscriptions from Rome dated roughly to the 3rd–4th centuries cite this biblical expression, and interestingly they all have different versions of the Greek text. One of the three inscriptions[82] has what is considered to be the version of Akylas: μνήμη δικαίου εἰς εὐλογίαν; later, however, it uses the LXX term, ἐγκώμια. The second inscription[83] has something very similar: μνία δικαίου εἰς εὐλογίαν. The third[84] has μνήμη δικαίου σὺν ἐγκωμίῳ, apparently a form of the LXX version which has been revised towards the MT Hebrew by putting the plural nouns into the singular.

An inscription from Kissamos in north-west Crete dated to the 4th–5th century, from the grave of a woman, has a formula which is less a quotation than a recollection of Prov 10:7: μνήμη δικαίας εἰς αἰῶνα· ἀμήν (*IJO* 1, Cre3). It is impossible to determine which version, if any, lies behind the phrase here.

In Thessalonike a Greek text painted within a wreath on a tomb, accompanied with a *menorah*, proclaims Κύριος μεθ' ἡμῶν ('God with us').[85] It has been claimed[86] that this is a paraphrase of LXX Ps 45:8, 12, but the reference is somewhat far-fetched: the wording of the Psalm is different, and the phrase could just as well be a translation of the name Emmanouel (Isa 7:14).

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[78] See the criteria offered in *JIWE* 1, ix–x; Bij de Vaate and van Henten, 'Jewish or non-Jewish?'; van Henten and Huitink, 'Inscriptions from Israel', 37–46. In our own investigation, since we are concerned with biblical quotations or Jewish institutions, such doubts are generally less evident.

[79] See the study by Cappelletti, 'Biblical quotations'.

[80] See *ibid.*, 128–32; Aitken, 'The Jewish use of Greek Proverbs', 61–5.

[81] The rendering εἰς εὐλογίαν is much older than Akylas: it is used of Judas the Maccabee in 1 Mac 3:7, as observed by Blau, 'Bible translations', 173.

[82] *JIWE* 2, 276.

[83] *Ibid.*, 112.

[84] *Ibid.*, 307.

[85] *IJO* 1, Mac13.

[86] *Ibid.*, 94.

Interesting confirmation of the continuing currency of the Septuagint, at least among the Samaritans, comes from a Samaritan inscription also discovered in Thessalonike and dated approximately to the 4th–6th centuries.[87] Relations between Jews and Samaritans in Late Antiquity are a complex and shadowy subject, but it is becoming clear that the Greek translations used by Samaritans have many affinities with those used by Jews and, indeed, Christians.[88] The inscription includes a translation of the priestly blessing in Numbers 6:22–7 which is essentially that of the Septuagint, revised towards the Samaritan Pentateuch (here virtually identical with MT) and with some stylistic adjustments.[89]

An inscription found at Iznik (ancient Nikaia) in Asia Minor gives the Greek text of Psalm 135:25, under a large *menorah.*[90] It does not seem to be a tombstone; it could be from a synagogue or a 'soup kitchen'. It has been dated approximately to the 4th–6th century. The text differs from that of LXX; its style resembles that of Akylas, but we cannot know for certain whether it comes from this translation.[91]

At Mopsuestia in Cilicia a badly-damaged mosaic floor shows scenes from the life of Samson (Judges 14–16), each accompanied by a Greek text.[92] It was probably created in the fifth century, though slightly earlier and later dates have been proposed. So far as one can tell from what remains, the biblical text is essentially close to the Septuagint, but contains some elaborations that have been described as 'midrashic' or 'targumic'.[93] It is tempting to see these mosaic texts as testimonies to the biblical texts used by Jews in this region. Such a view is, however, fraught with difficulties.

In the first place, is the building in which the mosaic was discovered Jewish or Christian? In the absence of any distinctive indications, scholarly opinion is divided on the question.[94]

If the building was a church, the supposed Jewish character of the inscriptions requires some explanation. They may indeed (for reasons that are unclear) represent a Jewish reading of the Samson story; in this case it is not

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[87] *Ibid.*, Mac17.

[88] See Pummer, 'The Greek Bible', 285.

[89] See Tov, 'Une inscription grecque d'origine samaritaine'; Pummer, 'The Greek Bible'; Evans, 'Greek Numbers 6,22–27'.

[90] *IJO* 2, no. 153.

[91] We do not know how Akylas translated this verse. Salvesen, 'Psalm 135(136):25', thinks that the wording of the inscription could well be from Akylas, but that it may be from another, unknown, translation, or may even have been made specially.

[92] Kitzinger, 'Observations'; Thümmel, 'Das Samson-Mosaik'.

[93] Stichel, 'Die Inschriften des Samson-Mosaiks'; Feissel, 'La Bible dans les inscriptions grecques'.

[94] Noy, 'Jewish archaeology and art in antiquity', esp. 211–13.

impossible that they reproduce a Jewish biblical text, of 'targumic' character, i.e. including some explanatory details.

If the building was a synagogue, it might be thought more likely that the inscriptions reproduce an existing biblical text. Yet how can we be certain that the book of Judges was actually read in the form represented on the pavement? Other scenarios are possible: for example the legends accompanying the images may have been created specially for the purpose, incorporating explanatory material so as to emphasise some aspect of the story.

Given such uncertainties, these interesting inscriptions raise so many intractable questions that it is safer to leave them to one side in investigating Greek Jewish Bible translations.[95]

To sum up, the inscriptions confirm a knowledge of Greek Biblical texts among Jews in our period, and testify to their use on tombstones and in other contexts. One text, Prov. 10:7, 'May the memory of the righteous be for a blessing', is particularly common, and has a formulaic character in funerary inscriptions, but there is no fixed form of the text. The citations reveal the influence of the Septuagint and Akylas, as well as of other translations. It is interesting to note that biblical quotations appear far more rarely in Jewish than in Christian epitaphs.[96] We also observed the influence of the type of Hebrew text represented by the MT, which seems to be strengthening its hold.

Manuscripts

In principle Greek biblical manuscripts should provide us with our most direct evidence for translations used by Jews in our period. In practice, however, this type of evidence is extremely difficult to assemble, not only because of problems in dating but because of severe difficulties of identifying manuscripts as Jewish. If we apply the strictest requirements, there are no manuscripts that can be both conclusively dated to our period and identified as Jewish. So valuable, however, is the potential testimony of such material that it is worth putting the question the other way round. If we ask which extant manuscripts are definitely Christian rather than Jewish we end up with a very substantial list of manuscripts that have no clear indication of Christian origin, such as the presence of New Testament texts or signs of Christian recensional activity. It is doubtful what inferences could be drawn from such a list, but if we apply some criteria which, while not conclusive, strongly suggest a Jewish origin,[97] we can identify a fair number of manuscripts which

[95] See the judicious discussion by Prigent, *Le Judaïsme et l'image*, 96–100.

[96] As observed by van der Horst, 'Jewish-Greek epigraphy in antiquity', 226.

[97] Suggested criteria include: use of scroll rather than codex format, absence of contractions of divine names, use of Hebrew tetragram, and a distinctive, elegant script.

are quite likely to be Jewish. Table 1 lists manuscripts which are stated by their editors or other specialists to be Jewish. (Although they are generally called papyri they are not necessarily written on papyrus. Three of those on the list are written on parchment and one is an *ostrakon* or broken piece of pottery.) Because datings are so uncertain, manuscripts dated to the third century have been included.[98]

Reference	Biblical Passage	Date and Type	Comments
P. Oxy. 1007 (P. Lit. Lond. 199),	Gen 2:7–3:8	3rd c., parchment codex.	Divine names: *Kyrios* is represented by a palaeo-Hebrew double *yod*; *theos* is contracted. Text: LXX.
P. Berlin 17213	Gen 19	Early 3rd c., papyrus codex	Space left for KC.
P. Oxy. 1166 (P. Lit. Lond. 201)	Gen 16:8–12	3rd c., papyrus roll	Divine names: *Kyrios* and *theos* both contracted. [Treu]
P. Oxy. 1075 (P. Lit. Lond. 203)	Exod 40	3rd c., papyrus roll	*Kyriou* contracted. The blank verso was reused in the 3rd or 4th c. to write the NT Apocalypse. [Treu]
Codex Washingtonensis (Freer Gallery of Art, cod. V)	Minor Prophets	Late 3rd c., papyrus codex	Hebraising text.
P. Antin. 8	Proverbs, Wisdom, Ecclesiastes	3rd c., papyrus codex	Hebraising text.
P. Antin. 9	Prov 2–3	3rd c., papyrus codex	'Eccentric text' [Treu]
Cairo ostrakon 215	Judith 15	Late 3rd c.	
P. Lit. Lond. 202	Gen 46–7	Ca 300, papyrus codex or roll	Divine names contracted.

[98] The following works have been very helpful to me in compiling this list: Bogaert, 'Septante et versions grecques', Tov, *Scribal Practices*, Appendix 5, 'Scribal Features of Early Witnesses of Greek scripture' (303–15); and Kraft, 'The "textual mechanics"', and the materials presented by him here: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/rak//earlylxx/jewish pap.html#3 (consulted 15 May 2015). Their work is heavily dependent on two earlier studies: Treu, 'Die Bedeutung des Griechischen', and Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief*.

P. Wien Rainer 18 [= Stud. Pal. ii.114, P. Vindob. G. 35782]	Ps 68(69), 80(81)	3rd/4th c., parchment roll	Elegant writing. *Kyrios* is represented by palaeo-Hebrew tetragram; *theou* is uncontracted. Text: Symmachos?
P. Alex. 203	Isa 48	3rd/4th c., papyrus roll	*Kyrios* contracted.
P. Harris 31	Ps 43	3rd/4th c., papyrus roll	Elegant writing. *Theos* uncontracted.
P. Oxy. 1225	Lev 16:33–4	Early 4th c., papyrus roll	
P. Lit. Lond. 211	Dan 1	Early 4th c., parchment roll	Elegant, 'Jewish' writing. *Theos* uncontracted. Text: Theodotion.
P. Antin. 10	Ezek 33–4	4th c., papyrus codex	Text: revised towards MT.
P. Sorbon. 2250	Jer 17f. and 46	late 4th c., papyrus codex	KC contracted. Hebraising text.
P. Giessen 13, 19, 22, 26	Deut 24–9	5/6th c., parchment codex	Hebraising text.
P. Berlin 17035	Gen 36	ca 500, parchment codex	Text: affinities to Hebrew. Symmachos?
Cambridge, UL, T-S 12.84 and 20.50	3 Reigns 21 (1 Kings 20), 4 Reigns (2 Kings) 23	6th c., parchment codex	Palaeo-Hebrew tetragram. Text: Akylas. (See below.)
Cambridge, UL, T-S 12.186, 187, 188	Psalms 90–92 (89–91), 96–8 (95–7), 102–3 (101–2)	6th c., parchment codex	Palaeo-Hebrew tetragram. Text: Akylas. (See below.)

Since these manuscripts were all found in Egypt, they may be thought to testify to the kinds of biblical texts that were read there in Late Antiquity. (It could conceivably be argued that they were hidden away or discarded precisely because they had been withdrawn from use;[99] this is however not likely for so many manuscripts in various different locations.) A good number of them are carefully and elegantly written, indeed Colin Roberts identified a particularly elegant style of writing as characteristic of Jewish manuscripts.[100]

[99] Justin, *Dialogue* 71–2, ed. Bobichon 378–80. See Bobichon's commentary, *Justin Martyr* 2, 767–70.

[100] Roberts, *Manuscript, society and belief*, 89.

This may well indicate that these manuscripts were publicly owned, luxury manuscripts, intended for public reading rather than private study.

As regards date, it is hard to know how to interpret the long gap from the fourth to the sixth century: it may well be due to chance.[101]

The material is either papyrus or parchment: there seems to be no clear preference, nor is there a clear preference for the roll or codex format.

In most cases the text is the Septuagint, but various revisions are also represented, including Symmachos, Theodotion and Akylas. Theodotion's version of Daniel replaced the Septuagint in most Christian manuscripts: it is interesting to see it in a Jewish manuscript. We may recall that Origen regarded both Septuagint and Theodotion Daniel as 'Christian' versions.[102]

The two books represented more than once on the list are Genesis and Psalms. This is perhaps not surprising. What is noteworthy is the absence of Numbers and Deuteronomy among the books of the Pentateuch. Overall a wide range of books is represented, including the Greek books Judith and Wisdom (always bearing in mind that some of the manuscripts listed may well be Christian).

Particular attention has been paid by researchers to the form of the divine names. In several cases the Greek words Κύριος and Θεός are contracted to their first and last letters, confirming the insight of Ludwig Traube that this practice, common in Christian manuscripts, had Jewish roots.[103] In a few cases Κύριος (for the Hebrew tetragram YHWH) is represented by a double *yod* or by a tetragram in palaeo-Hebrew letters. The use of this alphabet, associated with the coins of the Jewish revolt of Bar Kochba (132–5), has been taken as a mark of Jewish origin, but the evidence is not entirely unambiguous.

Consequently, it cannot be said with complete confidence that P. Oxy. 1007 must be Jewish. The palaeo-Hebrew tetragram is an old Jewish practice, represented in the Nahal Hever Minor Prophets scroll (1st century BC/1st century AD) and in an Oxyrhynchus papyrus, P. Oxy. 3522 (1st century AD). Assuming that the former is a Palestinian manuscript and the latter an Egyptian one this admittedly sparse evidence points to widespread and established usage by the first Christian century. Origen, in the 3rd century, says of the tetragram that it is pronounced *Adonai* in Hebrew and *Kyrios* in Greek, and that in the most accurate manuscripts it is written in Hebrew characters, 'not

[101] Kahle, 'The Greek Bible manuscripts', 117, writing of a slightly earlier period, suggests they were deliberately destroyed: 'As almost nothing of the kind has been preserved, we can only conclude that the Jews must at some time have intentionally destroyed whatever traces they could of the Greek Bible existing in the earliest Christian times'. This is a very speculative argument.

[102] Origen, *Letter to Africanus,* 4.

[103] Traube, *Nomina Sacra*, 26.

the present-day Hebrew characters but the most ancient ones' (*Selecta* on Ps 2:2). He is clearly referring here to Greek manuscripts; he does not explicitly say that they are Jewish manuscripts, simply that they are the most accurate copies.

The Hebrew tetragram in Greek manuscripts was not always written in palaeo-Hebrew letters. One of our oldest papyri, P. Fouad 266b (848) (mid-1st century BC), has the tetragram in square Hebrew characters (it is inscribed within a space left blank by the original scribe). There is some evidence that Origen's *Hexapla* also represented *kyrios* by the tetragram in square Hebrew characters: this is how it is written in all the Greek columns of the Milan palimpsest of the *Hexapla* (Ambrosian Library, O 39 sup.), while another palimpsest fragment has it written in roughly similar Greek letters: ΠΙΠΠ.[104] The latter form is also found in some Hexaplaric notes in the margins of various Septuagint manuscripts.[105] It is a reasonable inference that the tetragram in square Hebrew letters was a feature of the manuscripts from which the columns of the *Hexapla* were copied. It has been further inferred that all of the manuscripts used for the *Hexapla* (including the Septuagint) were Jewish manuscripts, since Christian scribes would hardly have replaced *Kyrios* by the Hebrew tetragram.[106]

The use of this device in undoubtedly Christian manuscripts of the *Hexapla*, coupled with the occurrence of a palaeo-Hebrew double *yod* in a Christian mosaic, makes it impossible to state with absolute certainty that any other Greek manuscript containing the Hebrew tetragram must be Jewish, but there is surely a very strong presumption in this direction.

Apart from the biblical manuscripts mentioned so far there are a few other manuscripts which may testify to Jewish use of Greek Bible translations. A rare example is P. Egerton 5, a leaf from a codex containing a Greek prayer. It is not known where in Egypt it was found; it has been dated to the late 4th or early 5th century. Much of the language is reminiscent of the Septuagint; to the best of my knowledge it has never been analysed to see if there are parallels in other translations.[107]

P. Oxy. 2745 contains part of a Greek glossary of biblical personal names, on the verso of a land register. The glossary has been dated to the late third or possibly fourth c. It has been claimed that the glossary was originally com-

[104] See Jenkins, 'The first column of the Hexapla', esp. n. 13.

[105] See Taylor, *Hebrew-Greek Cairo Genizah palimpsests*, 26–7.

[106] So Kahle, 'The Greek Bible manuscripts', 115.

[107] See van der Horst, 'Papyrus Egerton 5'. The author confidently rejects the view that the prayer is Christian. See also *idem*, 'Neglected Greek evidence for early Jewish liturgical prayer'; van der Horst and Newman, *Early Jewish prayers*.

piled the 3rd or 2nd century BC, and that it is based on the LXX; there is no conclusive indication whether the copy is Jewish or Christian.[108]

The editor of a copper *lamella* (an amulet) found in Sicily and now in the Syracuse Museum, which identifies itself as the 'Phylactery of Moses', has reconstructed the text of Deuteronomy 32:1–3 in Akylas's translation in this magical text, which is dated on palaeographical grounds to the 2nd or 3rd century. He also maintains that 'Allusions to other biblical passages can also be detected, as well as less formal references to the language or style of Aquila'.[109] He writes:

> It is not difficult to imagine that the text at least originates in some esoteric Jewish group interested in the power of Moses as a *magus*, and that such a sectarian, Greek-speaking community (or individual) made use of a composition that employed an Aquilan (or proto-Aquilan) version of the Jewish Bible – much of it in a liturgical fashion.[110]

This is an important testimony, particularly as it was found in a region where information about Judaism in this period is very rare.

The Akylas palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah (MANUSCRIPTS 1 & 2)

One day, a thousand years ago or more, probably in Palestine, a Hebrew scribe engaged in writing a copy of the Palestinian Talmud (Order *Mo'ed*) decided to reuse some pieces of parchment taken from an ancient codex. He may have bought the parchment, or been given it, we cannot tell. The parchment had writing on it, but someone, our scribe or someone else, had done his best to wash the old ink off, and the parchment was now considered suitable for recycling in a new codex. The old writing was in Greek, in old-fashioned majuscule script, and our Jewish scribe did not know, or did not care, that it was a copy of the biblical Book of Psalms. He presumably did not notice that here and there, embedded in the Greek text, was the holy four-letter name of God written in palaeo-Hebrew letters.

Around the same time, another scribe was writing a book of Hebrew liturgical poems (the *Qerovot* of Yannai to readings from the book of Leviticus), and he too took some old Greek parchments to make up his codex. He too was apparently unaware that they contained biblical texts, with the sacred name in old Hebrew letters.

At some time, these Hebrew manuscripts made their way to Old Cairo (Fostat), where, after long years of use, badly damaged and dismembered,

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[108] Rokeah, 'A new onomasticon fragment'.
[109] Kotansky, *Greek magical amulets*, 126–54, here 126–7.
[110] *Ibid*., 127.

they ended up in the Genizah of the Ben Ezra synagogue. From here Solomon Schechter removed them to Cambridge in 1897, and in the same year the Cambridge University Press published the New Testament scholar Francis Crawford Burkitt's handsome edition of *Fragments of the Books of Kings according to the translation of Aquila*, from two of the three surviving fragments of the Yannai palimpsest, with a preface by Charles Taylor.

With astonishing speed which conveys something of the excitement of the discovery, Burkitt had managed to read the Greek text, washed and faded as it was, and obscured by the Hebrew writing on top, and to identify it as part of Akylas's lost translation of the books of Kings or Reigns. Three years later, Taylor brought out his edition of the lower text of the third palimpsest in that codex, containing part of Origen's *Hexapla*, and other Genizah palimpsests, including the fragments of the Psalms mentioned earlier.

Burkitt's fragments (MANUSCRIPT 1) come from a parchment codex, written in two columns. We have the remains of two bifolios. One is effectively only a folio, as very little remains of the other folio. The other is the central bifolio of a quire. The surviving parts of the text correspond to parts of 1 Kings 20 and 2 Kings 23 in the MT (3 Reigns 21 and 4 Reigns 23 in the LXX). The writing is Greek biblical majuscule, with no features to identify it as Jewish rather than Christian. Burkitt dates it to the end of the 5th or the beginning of the 6th century.[111] He finds the closest parallels to the script in three manuscripts which probably all, he says, come from Egypt. Guglielmo Cavallo, in his careful study of biblical majuscule,[112] dates them in the 6th century. The tetragram is written in Old Hebrew characters, in the form YHYH, except at one point (4 Reigns 23:24) where, at the end of a line, there was no room for the tetragram, and it is replaced by KY, for Κυρίου. This indicates, in case we had doubted it, that the tetragram was pronounced Κύριος.

Burkitt argued that there could be no doubt that the Kings fragments came from Akylas's translation.

> Each sentence exhibits the pedantically literal renderings of the Hebrew that are characteristic of Akylas and of no one else, and the evidence of style is supported by the agreement of this text with the scattered readings assigned to Akylas in Field's *Hexapla*. It is moreover clear that our MS is not a mere extract from the Hexapla itself. Apart from the improbability that such an extract was ever made, the occurrence of the Tetragrammaton in the Old Hebrew letters is decisive against this supposition. It is only likely that a palimpsest found in an ancient *Geniza* should have had a Jewish origin, and we know that Greek-speaking Jews used Akylas's Version in the time of Justinian (*Nov.* 146).[113]

[111] Burkitt, *Fragments of the Books of Kings*, 10.
[112] Cavallo, *Ricerche*, 89–91.
[113] Burkitt, *Fragments of the Books of Kings*, 9.

I should like to comment on these four statements. First, Burkitt's identifica-identification of the text as Akylas's translation of Kings has never, so far as I know, been challenged.[114] It bears all the marks of Akylas, including notably the use of the particle σύν to render Hebrew אֵת, which is considered to be one of the key features distinguishing Akylas from the *kaige* tradition. We also find וגם translated by καὶ καίγε, and distinctive vocabulary, such as συσκιασμός for סכה at 3 Reigns 21:12, 16.

Burkitt mentions the readings attributed to Akylas by Field in his edition of the remnants of Origen's *Hexapla*. Burkitt himself lists these readings for the relevant parts of 3 and 4 Reigns: there are only nine of them, including some translated into Greek from Syriac by Field.[115] They do indeed broadly agree with the palimpsest against the LXX of Codex Vaticanus. They are much closer to Codex Alexandrinus, but even where Vaticanus and Alexandrinus agree, they generally agree with our text. The Greek of 1–2 Kings/3–4 Reigns clings very closely to the Hebrew, and it seems that Akylas here is more of a light revision than a radical revision or fresh translation; this may be one reason why we have relatively few hexaplaric variants recorded.

Second, Burkitt says that the use of the Old Hebrew tetragram shows that the text was not copied from the *Hexapla*. If he were writing today I doubt he would be so confident in his assertion, since, as we saw earlier, the only two manuscript remains of the *Hexapla* (of which he was unaware), both suggest that all the texts collated in it gave the tetragram in Hebrew letters. Admittedly the Milan fragments published by Mercati give it in square Hebrew script, while the Genizah palimpsest published by Taylor uses the Greek capitals ΠΙΠΙ (representing YHYH in square letters). But these are late copies (the Genizah fragment has been dated to the 7th century), and they do not negate the possibility that in Origen's copy the Old Hebrew letters were used. At any rate, there does not seem to be any basis to the claim that the use of Old Hebrew letters in our fragments show that the text does not derive ultimately from the *Hexapla*.

The claim that 'It is only likely that a palimpsest found in an ancient *Geniza* should have had a Jewish origin' hardly bears up to scrutiny. A genizah is not a library or an archive, and in fact the Cairo Genizah contains a number of texts that are not Jewish. But we are dealing with the lower text in a palimpsest, so its presence in the genizah signifies nothing at all. In fact, the majority of palimpsests in the Cairo Genizah have clearly Christian lower

[114] Law, 'Kaige, Aquila, and Jewish revision', expresses some caution about this (e.g. 64), but nevertheless treats the text as representing Akylas.

[115] Burkitt, *Fragments of the Books of Kings*, 25.

texts.[116] The Akylas fragments may well have a Jewish origin, but that cannot be proved from their presence in the Genizah.

Finally, it is true that Justinian, as we have seen, specifically permits Jews to read publicly from Akylas, and I think it is a reasonable inference that some Jews, at that time, were attached to his version. But again, that does not count either against or in favour of the possible Jewish origin of our fragments.

The psalms fragments published by Charles Taylor (MANUSCRIPT 2) consist of three folios from a codex.[117] The text is written in a single column. The writing is very similar to that of the Kings fragments, but not identical. Burkitt (cited by Taylor) put the date 'after the middle of the 5th century A.D., but not later than the beginning of the 6th' (53). The latest palaeographical study, by Natalie Tchernetska, compares the fragments to manuscripts that have been dated in the 6th century.[118] It has been suggested that the codex originated in Egypt, although another Middle Eastern origin is not ruled out.[119] The tetragram, again, is written in Old Hebrew characters. Again, it looks like YHYH, although there is a slight different between the first and second *yod*. The Psalms are numbered according to the numbering of MT, not LXX.

The text is more extensive than that of the Kings fragments, and we also have far more hexaplaric variants. Taylor's careful comparisons of the Psalms texts not only with LXX but with the hexaplaric remains of Akylas and of Symmachos demonstrate clearly that the differences from LXX are as marked as are the similarities with hexaplaric attestations of Akylas. When we consider that three centuries or so had passed between Origen's copy of Akylas and this one, the similarities are remarkable.

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[116] Sokoloff and Yahalom, 'Christian palimpsests', 110 n. 4, go so far as to claim that 'In view of our knowledge of all the palimpsests from the Genizah this text [i.e. the Kings fragments, but perhaps by implication the Psalms fragments as well] must probably be of no exception as far as its Christian origins goes'. Yet they themselves refer to seven Hebrew palimpsests, which must be Jewish. Tchernetska, 'Greek-Oriental Palimpsests', 251, identifies two of the palimpsests they list as unidentified as being, respectively, probably pagan and definitely Jewish. This discovery, she says, 'seems to contradict assumptions made in the theory of the Christian association and to support the Jewish origin of the Greek lower text'.

[117] T-S 12.186, 12.187, 12.188. Sokoloff and Yahalom, 'Christian Palimpsests', 124, claim that another palimpsest fragment, T-S AS 78.412, belongs to the same manuscript. In fact it belongs to a different manuscript, now in Oxford: see Olszowy-Schlanger, 'On the Hebrew script', 282.

[118] Tchernetska, 'Greek-Oriental Palimpsests', 246–7.

[119] Tchernetska, 247–8. She cites Cavallo, *Ricerche sulla maiuscola biblica*, 89–91, for Egypt, but remarks (n. 32) that Edoardo Crisci 'places this environment in Mesopotamia or Syria'. Sokoloff and Yahalom, 'Christian palimpsests', 110: 'The Greek palimpsests conceivably could all have originated in Palestine'.

These large format, carefully written manuscripts, which are free from annotations of any sort, were what we might call 'lectern Bibles', intended to be kept in a synagogue and used for public readings. The use of the Old Hebrew tetragram supports this view: this script had died out of normal use centuries earlier, and its retention here seems to have an almost magical or talismanic character. A possible objection to this view is that the books of Kings were not read in their entirety in any synagogue. We do not know enough about synagogal readings to evaluate the force of this objection.

A contrary view was entertained and immediately dismissed by Burkitt, as we have seen, namely that they are copied from the Akylas column in the *Hexapla*, and therefore by implication that they were of Christian, not Jewish origin. (Burkitt was writing about the Kings codex, but his arguments would apply equally to the copy of the Psalms.) I have explained why I do not find Burkitt's arguments convincing. But perhaps there are other arguments that might be adduced in favour of a Christian origin?

One possible argument is the biblical majuscule script: all the other manuscripts written in similar scripts are considered to be Christian. We have, however, no definitely Jewish Greek manuscripts of this period for comparison, so that it is hard to assess the strength of this factor.

A second argument is from the contracted divine name, KY for Κυρίου (4 Reigns 23:24). (We also find several times the contraction ICΛ for Ἰσραήλ, always at the end of a line: 3 Reigns 21(20):11, 23:15 [restored], 19.) A great deal has been written about contracted *nomina sacra*, and scholarly opinion is divided about whether they are of Christian or Jewish origin. This being so, I cannot see that the presence of the contraction KY here can carry a great deal of weight either way.

A third argument is the fidelity of the texts, particularly the Psalms fragments, to the hexaplaric text of Akylas, as preserved in various Christian testimonies. Is it likely, we may ask, that two manuscripts, one copied three centuries after the other, should present exactly the same text, unless one were copied, immediately or at one or more removes, from the other? All I can say in reply to this question is that, firstly, there are some discrepancies, and secondly that we are, after all, dealing with what must have been considered, in some sense, as a sacred text.

One feature that might be taken to point to a Jewish rather than a Christian origin is the fact that the psalms are numbered according to the system found in the MT, not that of the LXX. We do not know for certain how the psalms were numbered in the *Hexapla*, but I think it would be surprising if the Hebrew numbering were to have been used.[120]

[120] The Milan palimpsest of the *Hexapla* psalter, cod. Ambrosianus O 39 sup., follows the LXX numbering for Akylas, as for all the preserved columns. The editor, Giovanni Mercati, remarks: 'L'altro numero, anche se fu originariamente nell'Esaplo, nelle copie

I do not see decisive evidence here that our texts are copied from the *Hex-Hexapla*, and in fact we do not know that such copies were made. Theoretically it is also possible that Christian scribes copied Akylas independently of the *Hexapla*, either for purposes of study or for liturgical purposes. Recently Reinhart Ceulemans has subjected the question to careful scrutiny, and found no decisive evidence that such copies circulated among Christians during the period that concerns us.[121] A text that Ceulemans does not cite, the anonymous *Dialogue with the Jews* (Διάλογος πρὸς Ἰουδαίους), preserved in a manuscript on Mt Athos (*Vatopedinus* 236), and which its editor, José Declerck, dates to the middle of the 6th century,[122] cites freely from Akylas, and indeed preserves some Akylan readings that are not found elsewhere, and some that differ from those given by Field. Declerck attaches some importance to these quotations, and wonders whether the author had access to an independent manuscript of Akylas, without being able to settle the question either way. The influence of the *Hexapla* is evident however when he quotes from Symmachos, Theodotion, 'the Others' or 'the Three'. The dialogue contains some invective against Akylas, similar to that found in another dialogue, the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila.* [123] (Both dialogues, incidentally, are associated by their respective editors with Justinian *Nov*. 146.) The Jews are said to be attached to Akylas, who is called 'your Akylas' (Ἀκύλας ὁ σός) and 'much-liked by the Jews' (ὁ προσφιλὴς Ἰουδαίοις Ἀκύλας) (IX.253).

Such attitudes make it more likely that our fragments are Jewish, not Christian. No source refers to Christians, not even Judaizers, using Akylas liturgically, whereas we have seen several indications of a Jewish attachment to Akylas. Consequently, with all due caution, I prefer to take them as coming from Jewish manuscripts, and as opening a window on a very interesting facet of Greek-speaking Judaism in the time of Justinian.

Concluding remarks

We have seen that in this early period Greek was the dominant spoken and written language of Jews throughout the Roman empire, although some other languages were also used (Latin in the west, Aramaic and Hebrew in the

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eseguite da ordinari copisti, ignoranti o incuranti di quelle piccolo differenze, difficilmente si sarebbe salvato a lungo contro l'uso commune . . .' (*Psalterii Hexapli reliquiae, Pars prima, "Osservazioni",* 54). I take this as a somewhat oblique admission that we do not know which numbering was followed for Akylas in Origen's *Hexapla*.

[121] Ceulemans, 'Greek Christian access to "the Three"'.

[122] Declerck (ed.), *Anonymus Dialogus*.

[123] See Andrist, 'The Greek Bible used by the Jews', 246–7.

east). Very little is known about the Greek-speaking synagogues and their practices, but we must suppose that Greek was the language of prayer and Bible study in them, and indeed Greek seems to have had something of the status of a sacred language, to judge by its use in Jewish epitaphs in the west long after it stopped being used by Christians.

In the course of the period we observe some attempts to introduce Hebrew into the synagogue. Our prime witness to this development is Justinian's Novel 146, which gives us a unique glimpse into the *Kulturkampf* resulting from these attempts. I have suggested that the Novel preserves some of the wording of the plea submitted by the Hellenist faction, who wished to preserve their traditional custom of reading from the Bible in Greek, and who at the same time disparaged the aims and practices of the Hebraists. In particular, I suggested that the Novel provides evidence of an enduring attachment to the Septuagint translation among the Hellenists, and that it also confirms a connection between the translation of Akylas and the rabbinic movement, which can thus be seen to be associated with (and may have instigated) the pressure to introduce readings in Hebrew. Akylas, with its very close relationship to the proto-Masoretic Hebrew text, may have been used as a kind of 'targum' by the Hebraists in Greek-speaking communities.

That it would be mistaken, however, to insist on too neat and schematic an opposition between Hellenists and Hebraists is shown by the evidence of the inscriptions. These point to a certain openness or fluidity in the use of a range of different translations, including Akylas.

Surviving manuscript fragments confirm this impression of fluidity, even allowing for the difficulty of distinguishing in many cases between Jewish and Christian manuscripts. Different text-types are represented, and there is no consistent way of writing the biblical text, for example on scroll or codex. There are different ways, too of writing the divine names, including the use of palaeo-Hebrew letters within a Greek text. I have argued that some fragments recovered from the Cairo Genizah, and dating from around the time of Justinian's Novel, faithfully reproduce the translation of Akylas and on balance are likely to be Jewish rather than Christian. They are well executed by trained Greek scribes, and thus probably offer us further insight into the success of the rabbinic movement in the Greek-speaking synagogues.

Chapter 5

The ‘Dark Ages’ (7th to 10th centuries)

Historical background

The long period from the reign of Herakleios (610–64) to that of Basil II (976–1025) is a dark age of Byzantine Jewish history in more than one sense. It seems obscure to us because of a shortage of information, not merely about events and individuals, but even about the basic conditions of Jewish life in the empire. And it seems dark in the sense of gloomy, because the little we do know suggests a picture of growing intolerance and isolation, and even physical attacks and forced baptisms. The breakdown of urban life, we sense, must have had profound effects of the social, economic and cultural life of an essentially town-based community. The loss of the eastern provinces (Egypt and Syria, including Palestine) to the Arabs, catastrophic for the empire, was no less dramatic in its consequences for the Jewish minority, cut off henceforth from ready contact with these areas that were both symbolically and in a real sense, with Iraq to the east, the source of Jewish identity, life and culture. It is hard for us to imagine and assess, in the absence of direct testimonies, the impact of these changes on the Jews of the empire.

In reality, the picture is not quite as dark as it may appear, in a number of ways. So far as sources of information are concerned, for one small corner of the empire they are, if not abundant, at least much less sparse than for the empire as a whole. The atypical region of southern Italy, at a political and cultural crossroads, was the home of a relatively flourishing Jewish life which, for random and unconnected reasons, is less obscure to us than others.[1] A key source is the family history known as the Chronicle of Ahimaas ben Paltiel, written in rhymed Hebrew prose in Capua in 1054 and preserved by chance in a single manuscript now in Toledo.[2] The chronicler traces the story of a single family from the middle of the ninth century down to his own day.

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[1] See von Falkenhausen, ‘The Jews in Byzantine South Italy’.

[2] Text: *Megillat Ahimaaz*, ed. Klar. Translations: *The Chronicle of Ahimaaz*, tr. Salzman; *Sefer Yuhasin: libro delle discendenze*, tr. Colafemmina.

A second happy accident is the survival of a number of archaeological remains, including notably a significant quantity of inscriptions.[3] It may give some idea of the scarcity and importance of this source if we point out that at least half of all the published Hebrew inscriptions from the Byzantine empire are in southern Italy. The inscriptions help to flesh out the story told in the Chronicle of Ahimaas, indeed some of them relate to individuals mentioned in the Chronicle. We can also learn a good deal about the Jewish culture of Byzantine South Italy from Hebrew works composed there during our period, of which two became very popular and are preserved in many later manuscripts.

One of these is the anonymous historical work known as the *Yosippon*, which has some claim to be considered the oldest Hebrew prose work written on the European continent.[4] It is based ultimately on Josephus, and tells the story of the Jewish people from the Babylonian captivity to the destruction of the Second Temple. Although the author clearly knew Latin and uses Latin sources, the work is generally, for good reasons, associated with Byzantine South Italy.[5] Among the sources of the *Yosippon* are not only the Latin translations of the ancient historian Josephus, but the Latin and perhaps Greek Bible, notably those portions that are lacking in the Hebrew.[6] The book very quickly established itself as a classic among Jewish communities as far apart as France and (in Arabic translation) the Middle East.

The other important work is a compendium of astronomical and medical lore, as well as biblical exegesis, compiled by Shabbetai Donnolo (912/3–after 982) and generally known under the title *Hakhmoni*.[7] His book testifies to his sound education and wide reading. He acquired a considerable knowledge of astronomy, philosophy and medicine, and writes freely in Hebrew (with many terms in Greek and Latin). He displays a familiarity with the Babylonian Talmud and a range of midrashic works, but also with the Wisdom of Solomon, a book of the Greek Bible not attested in Hebrew. It has been suggested that Donnolo may have read it in Latin.[8]

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[3] Colafemmina, 'Archeologia ed epigrafia'; *idem*, 'Hebrew inscriptions'; *idem*, 'Le testimonianze'.

[4] Dönitz, *Überlieferung und Rezeption*, 17. Text, introduction and commentary: *The Josippon*, ed. Flusser. The date of 953 accepted by the editor is now viewed with scepticism by some specialists, who prefer a date early in the 10th or even in the late 9th century: see Dönitz, *Überlieferung und Rezeption*, 9–11.

[5] Flusser, '*Josippon*, a medieval Hebrew version of Josephus', 393–4.

[6] Dönitz, '*Sefer Yosippon* and the Greek Bible'.

[7] Mancuso, *Sefer Hakhmoni*; *idem*, *Shabbatai Donnolo's Sefer Hakhmoni*.

[8] *Idem*, *Sefer Hakhmoni*, 277 n. 209. Mancuso has attempted to reconstruct Donnolo's library, *Shabbatai Donnolo's Sefer Hakhmoni*, 35–40.

Among other Hebrew writings securely located in Byzantine South Italy are a number of liturgical poems ascribed to various authors, including some who are mentioned in the Chronicle of Ahimaas.[9]

There may well be other extant Hebrew writings originating in Byzantine southern Italy, but if so we cannot identify them for certain.[10] Because of the clear indications of a Jewish cultural life in the region, and possibly for other, less tangible, reasons, there was a tendency for nineteenth-century scholars, notably the great Leopold Zunz, to attribute various Hebrew writings to South Italy, but improved knowledge of other regions (particularly Palestine, as a result of the Cairo Genizah discoveries) has led to a reassessment of these attributions, and nowadays it is hard to advance convincing arguments in support of them.[11] Still, we have enough reliable material from Byzantine South Italy to show us something of Jewish life, including the aspects that concern us here.

The most striking fact is the sudden dominance of the Hebrew language in our sources. It is not that other languages are unknown – on the contrary, the author of the *Yosippon*, as we have said, clearly had a reading knowledge of Latin (and perhaps Greek), Shabbetai Donnolo knew several languages, and the Chronicle of Ahimaas makes it clear that the Jews of Oria spoke a Romance dialect among themselves. But all these works are couched in Hebrew, and their authors not only felt a need to write in this language but reveal no particular difficulty in doing so; moreover, they show familiarity with the Hebrew Bible. In other words they had a Hebrew education.[12] All this stands in marked contrast to the preceding period, when written Hebrew was scarce, and the Jews were clearly more comfortable writing Greek or Latin. It is impossible to put a date on the change: we have no real evidence for Hebrew before the beginning of the ninth century, but the absence of Greek and Latin at this time and the competence of the earliest Hebrew writing[13] suggest a previous period of gradual change. In some respects the change was not complete. As already mentioned, the author of the *Yosippon*

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[9] Schirmann, *Zur Geschichte*; *idem*, 'The beginning of Hebrew poetry in Italy and northern Europe'; Weinberger, *Jewish hymnography*, 136–43; Hollender, 'Il *piyyut* italiano'; Fleischer, 'Hebrew liturgical poetry in Italy'.

[10] On some early rabbinic writings said to originate in South Italy see Ta-Shma, '*Halakhot ketsuvot*'; Kiener, 'The Hebrew paraphrase'.

[11] There is still a lingering tendency to locate works in southern Italy rather than in other Byzantine regions: de Lange, 'Hebrew Scholarship in Byzantium'.

[12] Donnolo is able to write rhymed Hebrew prose. The *piyyutim* mentioned earlier testify to a mastery of this demanding Hebrew poetic genre, which was later very widespread in Byzantium: see Weinberger, *Rabbanite and Karaite liturgical poetry*.

[13] Dated Hebrew funerary inscriptions in a cemetery in Venosa span the first half of the ninth century: see Cassuto 'The Hebrew inscriptions'. On the arrival of Hebrew in Europe see de Lange, 'The Hebrew language'.

drew on stories from the Greek Bible not found in the Hebrew (specifically 1 and 2 Maccabees and the 'pluses' of the Greek Esther).[14] Should we infer from this a certain resistance to the Hebraising tendency (from an author who embraced it to the extent of writing in Hebrew), or simply an affectionate regard for stories deeply embedded in Jewish usage?

The author of the *Yosippon* does not provide us with explicit evidence for the continued use of Greek translations in public reading, yet it is surely highly suggestive that his use of texts from the Greek Bible (even if his immediate source was a Latin translation, which is not clear) come from precisely two books that were closely associated with festivals of the liturgical year, namely Hanukkah and Purim. While he does not seem to make use of Judith, which was associated with Hanukkah in some circles, his close familiarity with the history set out in 1 and 2 Maccabees, and his interest in the martyrdom of the mother and her seven sons and the priest Eleazar in 2 Maccabees (which are correctly set during the persecution of Antiochos, and not during the Roman persecution as in rabbinic tradition),[15] may well point to a living tradition of using these Greek texts during the public celebration of Hanukkah. Interestingly, Eleazar the priest is identified in the *Yosippon* with one of the translators of the Septuagint, a unique touch which may possibly hint at an association between the festival of Hanukkah and the Greek translation of the Torah.[16] As for the portions of Esther found only in Greek, it is noteworthy that both the prayer of Esther and the prayer of Mordecai are longer in the *Yosippon* than in the Greek Bible, which may well be taken as a hint of continuing liturgical use of these prayers among Greek-speaking Jews. The prayer of Esther is preceded by a recitation of the saving acts performed by God on behalf of the people of Israel, which may also have had a liturgical function.[17]

When we turn from Italy to the rest of the empire, and particularly to the central heartlands, including the metropolis, Constantinople, we are faced with the severe shortage of evidence mentioned earlier. The archaeological record is virtually blank: while there are some inscriptions, none can be dated conclusively to this period.[18] As for literary compositions, these are generally

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[14] Dönitz, '*Sefer Yosippon* and the Greek Bible'. A copyist later added some stories from the Greek books of Daniel and Esdras.

[15] See Dönitz, '*Sefer Yosippon* and the Greek Bible', 226.

[16] 'Torah' was understood as meaning 'light' or 'illumination', while the winter festival of Hanukkah is celebrated in part as a celebration of light. On the story of the translation in the *Yosippon* see Wasserstein, *The legend of the Septuagint*, 192–216.

[17] On such prayers in the Bible and in Greek Judaism see Harl, *Voix de louange*, esp. 191–204.

[18] An inscription in Corinth is dated to the first half of the 10th century by Starr, *JBE* 148, no. 85. Jacoby, 'Silk in Western Byzantium', 455 and n. 14, disputes Starr's interpretation and dating (without suggesting an alternative).

impossible to localise.[19] Overall, however, there is nothing that might make us modify the picture drawn from the Italian evidence or lead us to think that it is not characteristic of the empire as a whole.

Given the scarcity of evidence for the use of Greek Bible translations by Jews during this period, exceptional importance attaches to a document which might otherwise appear rather meagre. It is a fragment found in the Cairo Genizah that testifies simultaneously to the growing presence of Hebrew in Byzantine Judaism and to the enduring strength of the Greek biblical tradition.

A glossary to Exodus, Isaiah and Jeremiah[20]

Like the fragments considered in the previous chapter, this document is a palimpsest. In its present form it is a virtually entire bifolio from an early copy of part of the Palestinian Talmud (*Sota* 5:9, 22d–23d).[21] It has been dated, approximately, to the first half of the tenth century.[22] No other folios from this manuscript have been identified. To make this bifolio, the scribe took an existing bifolio from an earlier book, and reused it as it was (apart from the partial cleaning off of the earlier writing). The new book had the same dimensions as the old one, and the new lines of writing more or less cover, and tend to obliterate, the old ones. So effectively was this done that very little of the lower writing can now be read, even with the help of modern aids such as ultra-violet light.[23]

Enough can be read, however, to reveal the nature of the original codex. It was a bilingual glossary to the Hebrew Bible, carefully set out in parallel columns: Hebrew words in Hebrew writing on the right, and the equivalent Greek words in Greek writing to the left. There were two pairs of columns on each page, so that our bifolio contains traces of eight separate pairs of columns. The entire book was designed to be read from right to left, like a Hebrew book. There may be as many as 40 lines to a column, so the bifolio may have originally contained over 300 Hebrew words with their Greek translations. Today, however, only a small fraction of these can be

[19] See de Lange, 'Hebrew scholarship in Byzantium'.

[20] MANUSCRIPT 3.

[21] *Yerushalmi fragments from the Genizah* 1, ed. Ginzberg, 215–17.

[22] Tchernetska, Olszowy-Schlanger and de Lange, 'An early Hebrew-Greek biblical glossary', 116.

[23] See the photographs in Tchernetska, Olszowy-Schlanger and de Lange, 'An early Hebrew-Greek biblical glossary'. In 2007 Professor Roger L. Easton, of Rochester Institute of Technology, applied advanced imaging techniques which had been effective with other palimpsests, but even these did not produce substantial results.

deciphered, both because the ink has been washed off and because the upper writing covers the lower.

The two folios come from different parts of the Bible: the first (right-hand) one starts close to the beginning of Exodus and breaks off in Exodus 28; the second (left-hand) one starts at the end of Isaiah and breaks off in Jeremiah 38. We cannot know for certain how much of the Bible was covered in the glossary. It has been suggested that there were five bifolios in the original quire, of which ours may have been the second. In this case the original book may have consisted of a single quire, covering the Pentateuch and Prophets, or there may have been a second quire containing the Hagiographa. Either way, the book was a slim, relatively informal work, more like a notebook than a composition intended for publication.[24]

The Hebrew writing, while it has some distinctive features, is not fundamentally dissimilar to that of many other texts found in the Genizah. The Greek writing, however, is very distinctive. It is a form of Greek majuscule, totally different from the styles of writing used in our period. Its closest relations are in other Jewish texts from the Genizah, but it is not identical to any of these.[25]

We have no means of dating the glossary other than the very general consideration that it must be earlier than the upper text (Palestinian Talmud). But that, as we have seen, has been dated only approximately, to the first half of the tenth century. We have no way to tell how much time elapsed before the earlier manuscript was reused. A date somewhere in the ninth century is probable. As for the locality in which it was written, we really have no means of telling, beyond the obvious point that it must have been somewhere where there was some knowledge of both Greek and Hebrew. This points to the Byzantine empire, but other regions cannot be ruled out. We know of the presence of Greek-speaking Jews in Egypt at a slightly later period.[26] An origin in the Land of Israel cannot be excluded, either. It has been pointed out that the words selected for glossing frequently correspond to those singled out by the Masoretes for special comment.[27] It is not impossible that the glossary was in some way connected with the work of Masoretes, in Tiberias or elsewhere in the Land of Israel, although of course this in no way negates its connection with Byzantine Jewry. It is particularly interesting that the Hebrew lemmata frequently disagree (sometimes radically) with the forms pre-

[24] Tchernetska, Olszowy-Schlanger and de Lange, *ibid*., 95.

[25] *Ibid*., 109–19; Olszowy-Schlanger, 'The Hebrew script'; de Lange and Tchernetska, 'Glosses in Greek'.

[26] See documents 2 and 3 in *GJT*.

[27] Tchernetska, Olszowy-Schlanger and de Lange, 'An early Hebrew-Greek biblical glossary', 119–20.

served in Masoretic Bibles, which may point to a formative stage in the Masoretic process.[28]

A comparison of the legible glosses with the Septuagint shows very striking agreements, for example Exod 16:13 ὀρτυγομήτρα for השלו, Exod 18:8 τὸν μόχθον for התלאה, Exod 26:19 βάσεις for אדנים, Jer 5:8 θηλυμανεῖς for מיזנים, Jer 36 (LXX 43):22 ἐσχάρα for אח.

These agreements with LXX are a strong reminder of the enduring influence of LXX on the Jewish versions current in the Middle Ages, but should not be interpreted as a sign that Jews at this time were familiar with the forms of the Greek text that were being used in the Christian Church. The key point to note is that in these cases we do not know the rendering of 'the Three' (Akylas, Symmachos and Theodotion).

Yet we do know that the Three often agree with LXX. In other cases the Three differ from LXX, and in such cases our fragment tends to agree with one or more of the Three against LXX, e.g. Exod 19:12 ὁριοθετήσεις with the Three for הגבלת (LXX ἀφοριεῖς), Exod 28:14 ἁλύσεις with Ak. and Sym. for שרשת (LXX κροσσωτά, Th. χαλαστά). Very importantly, wherever we have the readings of Akylas and Symmachos and/or Theodotion, and they differ among themselves, the fragment agrees with Akylas. Only once (at Jer 5:10) does the fragment have a different reading from Akylas.

In some cases the reading of Akylas is not attested at the point in the text in question, but his use of the same Greek word for the same Hebrew one makes it highly likely that the gloss represents his version. For example at Exod 9:31 our fragment reads νεαρός for אביב. This is the word Akylas uses for the same Hebrew word a little later, at Exod 13:4, and because of his very consist method of translating it is probable that he had νεαρός here too.

What are we to make of the preponderance of Akylas readings? Surely the inescapable inference is that behind the glossary, which is a reference work or teaching aid, lies an impressive familiarity with Akylas's translation.[29] Given that some seven or eight centuries separate Akylas and the other translations from the Genizah fragment this is a remarkable story of survival. As we shall see presently, their influence was felt even later in Byzantine Jewry.

Possible Christian testimonies

The pious scholar St Constantine the Philosopher (later known as Cyril), a native of Thessalonike who was educated in Constantinople, was sent to convert the Jewish Khazars in 860–1. According to his biography, composed

[28] *Ibid*., 120.

[29] See further de Lange, 'An early Hebrew-Greek Bible glossary'.

some twenty years later, he learnt Hebrew, but he also shows familiarity with the translation of Akylas, from which he quotes in discussion with the Jews surrounding the Khazar king.[30] The use of Akylas in debates between a Christian and a Jew is something of a commonplace of the controversial literature, but in this case verses purporting to come from Akylas are quoted verbatim.

Constantine-Cyril and his brother Methodios have traditionally been credited with translating the Bible into Old Church Slavonic.[31] The story of the translation of the biblical books into Slavonic is in fact far more complicated.[32] An interesting aspect from our perspective is the Slavonic translation of the book of Esther. This translation clings very closely to the Hebrew MT, and differs considerably from the two extant Greek translations. Majority scholarly opinion has maintained that it was translated directly from the Hebrew. A dissenting view, put forward by the Russian philologist Aleksej Sobolevskij, has been taken up by Horace G. Lunt and Moshe Taube, who have argued that there was an intervening Greek translation from which the Slavonic version was made.[33] This hypothetical Greek translation, of which no other trace has been found, would have been, they reason, a very literal, word-for-word translation of the Hebrew. We have no clue as to its date or place of origin. Of course it must have been available, *ex hypothesi*, wherever and whenever the Slavonic translation was made, but that seems impossible to tie down. The various Slavonic manuscripts are traced back to a single source of the mid-14th century, but they believe that the translation must have existed before 1300, and may even go back to the late 9th century. The Slavonic translation, too, is a very direct, word-for-word rendering, and even though it has been corrupted in the course of transmission further research might make it possible to reconstruct the Greek source, assuming it existed.

Concluding remarks

The long 'dark ages' of the 7th–10th centuries are illuminated for us by a single concrete document, a tiny fragment that is so badly obliterated that only a few of its words can be clearly read. Yet these factors only serve to set

[30] Kantor and White, *The vita of Constantine*, 27.
[31] Kantor and White, *The vita of Methodius*, 89.
[32] For a summary see Cooper, 'The Bible in Slavonic'.
[33] Lunt and Taube, 'The Slavonic Book of Esther'. See also Altbauer and Taube, 'The Slavonic Book of Esther'; Lunt and Taube, 'Early East Slavic translations from Hebrew?'; *idem*, *The Slavonic Book of Esther: text, lexicon, linguistic analysis, problems of translation*.

in relief its importance, as an indication of the great cultural changes that were overtaking Greek-speaking Jewry in these centuries. The most fundamental change is the move from Greek to Hebrew as the high cultural language. Our document, although it is ostensibly bilingual, is actually a Hebrew book, written, and designed to be read, from right to left. Moreover, it bears traces of the work of the Masoretes, the critical editors of the Hebrew text of the Bible, although there are also some differences from the Masoretic edition as we now know it. On the other hand the Greek words are written in Greek letters, even though the possibility of writing Greek in Hebrew letters had existed for several centuries. The document thus belongs to, and sheds light on, a period of transition, between the situation we observed in the previous chapter, when Greek was still the dominant language, to that we shall witness in the next chapter, when Hebrew reigns supreme.

Close study of the Greek glosses in this palimpsest glossary reveals two interesting features. One is a relaxed approach to spelling, suggesting a less than perfect grasp of Greek grammar, or at least the relatively informal nature of the glossary. The Greek script, too, is irregular and clumsy compared to the earlier fragments considered in the previous chapter.

More significant is the relationship between the glosses and the ancient versions, both the Septuagint and the later revisions. The dominant influence seems to be that of Akylas; in fact it is possible that if both the glosses and Akylas's translation were better preserved we would see that the former are all taken from the latter. The persistence of knowledge of the older translations at this late date is an important testimony to the biblical culture of Byzantine Jews, displaying what one might call a typical Byzantine conservatism and attachment to the ancient Greek past.

The glossary is best understood as an aid to the study of the Hebrew Bible, for learners who are more familiar with Greek than with Hebrew. It should thus be seen as a tool in the panoply of those who wished to help and encourage Greek-speaking Jews to learn to read the Bible in Hebrew. Given what we already know about the role of Akylas's translation in this effort, the place of his renderings in the glossary hardly comes as a surprise.

Chapter 6

The age of the Genizah

Historical background

The period from Basil II to the capture of Constantinople by Latin crusaders in 1204 was a time of ups and downs for the empire. On the death of Basil in 1025 its frontiers extended from South Italy to the borders of Armenia and Syria and from the Danube and the Crimea to Crete and Cyprus. Its power was virtually unchallenged. Within decades, however, after a disastrous defeat by the Seljuk Turks at Mantzikert (1071), most of Asia Minor, in earlier times the core of the empire, had been lost to this rising power in the east, while in the west the Italian territories had been lost to another rising power, that of the Normans. Yet the eleventh century was a period of enormous material prosperity and cultural vitality, in which the Jewish minority participated. It was at this time that Karaism became a notable element for the first time in Byzantium. There was a notable immigration from neighbouring Muslim lands, including many Jews. The twelfth century was dominated by the incursions of western crusaders in the eastern Mediterranean region, resulting in political instability and culminating in the violent capture of the city of Constantinople by the westerners in 1204. Yet the Spanish Jewish visitor Benjamin of Tudela, passing through the empire on his way to the Middle East in the 1160s, testifies to a certain material and cultural richness for the Jewish communities he visited, tempered by the precarious situation of any minority. Thebes, he writes, is 'a large city with about two thousand Jews. They are the best in the land of Greece at making garments of silk and of purple cloth. There are among them great scholars in Mishna and Talmud, and others great in their generation'.[1] In Thessalonike, too, there are scholars and silk workers, but here, Benjamin notes, 'the Jews suffer oppression'. Enormously impressed by the city of Constantinople and by the wealth and pomp of its Christian inhabitants, Benjamin goes on to note that the Jews are made to live apart, in their own quarter. Here too there are scholars, and 'craftsmen in silk, merchants and many rich men', but 'they live under heavy oppression. . . . The Greeks hate the Jews, . . . they strike them in

[1] Translation in Sharf, *Byzantine Jewry*, 134. See Jacoby, 'Benjamin of Tudela'. On silk see *idem*, 'Silk crosses the Mediterranean'.

the streets and give them hard employment. Yet the Jews are rich, kind and charitable. They observe the commandments of Scripture and cheerfully bear the yoke of their oppression'.[2]

From the point of view of our enquiry, the 11th and 12th centuries are dominated by the Cairo Genizah. Although the earliest palimpsests in the Genizah go back to much earlier centuries, and materials continued to be deposited in the Genizah right up to the time when it was being cleared in the late 19th century, it is the 11th–12th centuries that have been dubbed the 'age of the Genizah' because of the extraordinary richness, in terms of quantity and quality, of the manuscripts of this period, clearly delimited by a mass of dated legal and other documents.

Only a relatively small proportion of these documents relate directly to Byzantium, but those that do add considerably to our knowledge of Byzantine Jewry.[3] In addition, we have non-documentary or 'literary' texts emanating from Greek-speaking areas, as we can see from their use of Greek language, generally couched in Hebrew letters but sometimes using the Greek alphabet.[4] Several of these relate to Greek Bible translations, and they originate in both Rabbanite and Karaite circles.[5] How they came to Old Cairo and ended up in the Genizah is something of a mystery. From the documentary materials we learn of Jewish travellers from Byzantium who spent some time in Egypt for trading and other purposes, Egyptian Jews who travelled to Byzantium, and also Byzantine Jews who were captured by pirates and ransomed in Egypt. There even seem to have been groups of Byzantine Jews settled in Egypt.[6] Any of these could have died in Old Cairo, and their books and documents been thrown into the Genizah.

In the remainder of this chapter we shall first survey the fragments from the Genizah testifying to the use of Greek Bible translations, before turning to other evidence from the same period.

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[2] *Ibid*.; *idem*, 'The Jews and the silk industry'. On the Jewish community of Constantinople see further *idem*, 'Les quartiers juifs de Constantinople'; *idem*, 'The Jews of Constantinople'. For an overview of the Jewish communities of the empire at this time see the map at www.byzantinejewry.net.

[3] De Lange, 'Byzantium in the Cairo Genizah'; Jacoby, 'What do we learn about Byzantine Asia Minor?'; Outhwaite, 'Byzantium and Byzantines in the Cairo Genizah'.

[4] De Lange, 'Hebrew-Greek Genizah Fragments'; *idem*, 'Hebrew/Greek Manuscripts'; *idem*, *GJT; idem*, 'Jewish use of Greek'.

[5] Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries'.

[6] Outhwaite, 'Byzantium and Byzantines'; Cohen, *Poverty and charity*, 84–85; de Lange, *GJT*, 11–19.

A translation of Kohelet (Ecclesiastes)

The earliest Genizah discovery relating to the Greek Bible, leaving aside the palimpsests discussed in Chapter 1, is still one of the most important.[7] It is so far the only known Genizah manuscript containing a continuous text in Greek written in Hebrew characters. The single parchment leaf contains part of the book of Kohelet (Ecclesiastes), from 2:13 to 2:23. Each verse of the Greek is preceded by the first word or two of the verse in Hebrew. The Greek is written in Hebrew letters, pointed throughout. A curious feature of the manuscript is that it is written in two columns per page; it superficially resembles a bifolio from a small codex, but that was clearly not its original format, and in fact there is no indication that the fragment ever formed part of a codex. How the leaves were kept in the right order is a mystery. We have no means of knowing what the nature of the original manuscript was: the book of Kohelet is the prescribed reading for the festival of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*), and this leaf may have come from a prayer book, or from a copy of Kohelet, or perhaps a collection of the so-called Five Scrolls. The unusual format has been thought to suggest an early date,[8] but this is not decisive.

Unlike most other Genizah fragments mentioned here, which contain only stray Greek words, this continuous text affords us the opportunity to study an actual Greek translation used in the medieval synagogue, and to compare it both with the Hebrew and with the much older Jewish translation which is preserved in Christian Bibles (the so-called LXX Ecclesiastes).

The translation is clearly written by someone whose educational background was Hebrew rather than Greek. It is hard to say whether he was transcribing an earlier copy or creating a new text, from memory or dictation, or even conceivably translating as he wrote. The date, as we have said, cannot be fixed: it is likely to be in the early eleventh century at the latest, perhaps much earlier. We have no indication whatever of the place of writing, beyond the fact that it is in Greek.

The Greek language of the translation does not correspond to any Greek that was actually spoken. It represents a very specific attempt to convey not only the meaning but the very form of the Hebrew, without paying much attention to the conventions of either written or spoken Greek. Hebrew idioms are rendered in a mechanical, word-for-word fashion. For example,

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[7] MANUSCRIPT 4.

[8] This is the view of Colette Sirat, cited by de Lange, *GJT*, 71. Natalio Fernández Marcos dates the translation on linguistic grounds between 600 and 1100, *Introducción*, 184 and 'El Pentateuco griego', 199–200. Bádenas, 'Aproximación', 13, thinks the fragment may be later than the 12th century, but gives no reason for this judgment; perhaps he is influenced by the dating implied by Blondheim, who mentions it in chronological order after the *Arukh*, a dictionary of Rabbinic Hebrew completed in 1101.

the article is unidiomatically omitted in Greek where the corresponding He-Hebrew noun has a personal suffix and therefore no article (e.g. ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ, 'his eyes'). Where the verb 'to be' is not expressed in Hebrew it is omitted in Greek too. Again, the Greek preserves the word order of the Hebrew. Thus we have a sentence such as:

ὁ σοφὸς ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ χωρικὸς εἰς τὸ σκότος πορευγόμενος, that may be translated literally:

'The wise his eyes in his head and the ignorant in the dark walking' (2:14) (which indeed is a very literal translation of MT: החכם עיניו בראשו והכסיל בחשך הולך).

This is intelligible, but it is far removed from any kind of normal Greek. The Greek linguist Julia Krivoruchko, in a recent article, has identified this 'calque language' as a distinctive form of Greek, which she terms 'Biblical Jewish Greek' or BJG. Essentially it combines Greek vocabulary with Hebrew grammar. It also has a tendency to imitate the sound of the Hebrew. Krivoruchko claims that it is an effective pedagogic tool for inculcating a knowledge of Hebrew in Greek-speakers.[9]

LXX Ecclesiastes has a similar approach to the translator's task; in fact it has been suggested that it is the work of Akylas himself.[10]

If we compare the Genizah fragment with LXX Ecclesiastes, we find that they are very similar to each other, not just because they are both meticulously word-for-word translations of the same Hebrew original, but because there is an actual family relationship between them. The clearest indication of this is the use of the Greek σύν to render the Hebrew particle **את**, which marks the direct object of the verb. This totally idiosyncratic use of σύν is a well-known feature of Akylas that is also found in LXX Ecclesiastes. It is not found in any translation not in the tradition of Akylas, or in any other Greek text. Outside the realm of biblical translation σύν is only attested as a preposition governing the dative case, and meaning 'with'. By the time our fragment was written this preposition was no longer part of the living Greek language. The use of σύν in this Genizah fragment is a very remarkable survival, and an incontrovertible indication of an affinity with the ancient tradition. It is all the more remarkable in that it has not so far been discovered in any other medieval Jewish source.

The fragment often appears to follow LXX Ecclesiastes very closely. For example, the sentence quoted above (2:14) reads in LXX as follows:

τοῦ σοφοῦ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐν κεφαλῇ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ ἄφρων εἰς τὸ σκότος πορεύεται.

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[9] Krivoruchko, 'Medieval and early modern Judaeo-Greek biblical translations'.

[10] See Barthélemy, *Les devanciers*, 21–30, and the discussion in Hyvärinen, *Die Übersetzung von Aquila*.

This is closer to idiomatic Greek than our fragment, and by the same token further removed from the Hebrew: we note the genitive form τοῦ σοφοῦ, the definite article before ὀφθαλμοί, and the finite form πορεύεται. On the other hand there is no article with κεφαλῇ, and the verb 'are' is lacking, as in the fragment. In other word the Genizah translation accentuates the 'crib-like' features that are already present in LXX.

There are, however, also very marked differences between the Genizah fragment and LXX Ecclesiastes. The latter (like other representatives of the so-called *kaige* group of translations[11]) uses the Greek word καίγε to represent the Hebrew גם, meaning 'also' or 'indeed'. The Genizah fragment, however, translates גם by γάρ, clearly a mechanical device, since γάρ in Greek does not mean 'also' (in classical Greek it is a conjunction meaning 'for'). The equivalence reflects an effort to imitate the sound of the Hebrew word in Greek. As we shall see, this is a recurrent feature of the Jewish translations.[12]

Notwithstanding the similarities to the ancient translation and the exploitation of older expressions like σύν or γάρ, the Greek of the Genizah fragment betrays many traces of medieval vernacular usage. In other words, the translator does not make a conscious effort to write formal, classical Greek. The morphology is sometimes medieval and indeed quite colloquial or possibly dialectal. One example is the instrusive γ in the participle πορευγόμενος cited above.[13] Others are the substitution of λ for ρ in ἐλχαμένων, 'coming', and ου for ο in ἀπουκάτω, 'underneath', or the disappearance of ν in ἀθρώπου. The vocabulary, too, presents a number of words that are not found in ancient Greek, for example the nouns χωρικία in the sense of 'ignorance', and μερτικόν, 'share',[14] and the verbs λησμονῶ, 'forget' and γυρίζω, 'turn'.

Some aspects of the vocabulary are not due simply to developments in the language but rather to a deliberate choice between two options. In the passage preserved in the fragment there is a recurrent contrast between the חכם, the sage or wise man, and the כסיל, the fool or ignoramus. These first of these terms, חכם, is translated consistently in the fragment by σοφός, and the abstract noun חכמה is rendered by σοφία. This usage agrees with LXX Ecclesiastes. However, when חכם is an adjective, 'wise', it is translated in the fragment not by σοφός but by φρένιμος; similarly the verbal form חכמתי is translated by ἐφρόνεσα. In classical Greek the verb φρονεῖν has a range of meanings, including to be wise or prudent. In the philosophers, φρόνησις has the specialised meaning of practical as opposed to theoretical or speculative

[11] On *kaige* see Fernández Marcos, *Introducción,* 151–62; Dines, *The Septuagint*, 81–90.

[12] Krivoruchko, 'Medieval and early modern Judaeo-Greek biblical translations', 166.

[13] See Krumbacher, 'Ein irrationaler Spirant', 359–444.

[14] On this word see Niehoff-Panagiotidis, 'Byzantinische Lebenswelt', 73–6.

wisdom. φρόνιμος means sensible or prudent, and its natural opposite is ἄφρων. The ancient translators, including Akylas, generally use σοφός, σοφία etc., although φρόνιμος and φρόνησις are found in 3 Reigns.[15] LXX Ecclesiastes uses σοφός etc. consistently. It is all the more interesting that the translator of our fragment uses the adjective φρένιμος and the cognate verb (terms which are not attested at all as having been used by Akylas), while insisting on the nouns σοφός and σοφία. A different tendency can be observed, however, with the rendering of the oppposite of the חכם, the כסיל. Here, where the ancient translator of LXX Ecclesiastes (like the translator of Proverbs) regularly used ἄφρων, our translator uses a post-classical word, χωρικός. This word, derived from χώρα, the country (as opposed to the town), came to mean a country bumpkin or an ignoramus. It is thus an obvious equivalent of the Rabbinic Hebrew עם הארץ, which, originally meaning 'people of the land', is used by the Rabbis to mean 'ignoramus', and to designate those who do not belong to the circle of the Rabbis, who are called חכמים in Hebrew and σοφοί in Greek. Perhaps χωρικός was the usual translation of עם הארץ in Greek-speaking rabbinic milieux – we have no means of telling. It is only by chance that some Christian texts preserve σοφός as the translation of חכם. It is a reasonable assumption that the medieval translator was familiar with this usage, or at any rate that he chose the word χωρικός because of its semantic closeness to עם הארץ, and also that he clung to the noun σοφός because of its rabbinic overtones.

לעולם (2:16) is translated εἰς τὸν αἰῶναν 'to the age' or 'to eternity', which is similar to LXX εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. The survival of this fossilised phrase is all the more remarkable in that by the time of our translation the preposition εἰς had stopped being used for 'to' and meant 'at', or 'in', and that is the way it is used elsewhere in our fragment, e.g. εἰς τὸ σκότος for בחשך (2:14, quoted earlier). I suggest the phrase may have been hallowed by liturgical use in Greek-speaking synagogues. The αἰών in question may be the μέλλων αἰών or αἰών ὁ ἐρχόμενος (the terms used in the New Testament), the Coming Age or עולם הבא.

To sum up, the Genizah translation is neither a free rendering of the Hebrew into either atticising or vernacular Greek of its time, nor is it a copy, however inaccurate, of LXX Ecclesiastes. It is best categorised as a descendant or family member of the ancient translation, preserving many elements of it and espousing the same philosophy of translation (notably in a commitment to the Hebrew syntax and word-order), but also admitting newer vocabulary and some vernacular elements, and perhaps incorporating some rabbinic ideas.

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[15] See Shenkel, *Chronology and recensional development*, 113–15.

A glossary to Zechariah, Malachi and Job

A badly damaged parchment bifolio from the Genizah preserves parts of a biblical glossary, written out in columns like the one we considered in the previous chapter, but this time the Greek words are written in Hebrew letters, partly pointed.[16] The folios are small and almost square. One folio lists words from Zechariah on one side (these are almost entirely illegible) and from Malachi on the other; the other folio covers Job 26:13–30:16. The glossary is carefully written and well laid out on the page, but some glosses are written vertically, whether to save parchment or as a result of poor planning, and the pointing is not done systematically: the recto of the Job folio is unpointed while the verso is pointed. To judge by the heavy wear suffered by the outer side of the bifolio this was the outer bifolio of a quire; logically, the inner bifolios (which would normally number three or perhaps four) should have covered the books of Psalms and Proverbs and the first twenty-five chapters of Job, but it is hard to imagine this, given that an entire bifolio is devoted to a few chapters in Job. Admittedly these chapters contain an exceptionally large number of rare or difficult words, but Psalms, Proverbs and the early chapters of Job are not without their difficulties. Perhaps, then, the glossary was more selective (for instance omitting in this case Psalms or both Psalms and Proverbs), or conceivably it is based on a Bible with the books arranged in a different order from the standard Masoretic one. From the observation that the quire begins in Zechariah and breaks off before the end of Job we are safe in supposing that it originally formed part of a substantial codex, perhaps covering the entire Hebrew Bible. The poor condition of the outside suggests that the quires were not bound together. It seems more like a notebook than a codex. As with all the glossaries we shall be dealing with, the entries follow the order of the biblical verses.

Like the translation of Ecclesiastes discussed in the last chapter, the Greek glosses on Malachi and Job betray clear evidence of their affiliation to the ancient translations, particularly to Akylas. In many cases the glosses use the same translation equivalents as Akylas, e.g. at Mal 2:2, ἰσπάνιν for מארה, Ak. σπάνιν, 'lack, dearth'.[17] Even more decisively, they use some words that are not attested in any Greek source at all outside the fragments of Akylas's translation. For example, the Hebrew word וניבו at Mal 1:12 is glossed καὶ γεννηματισμὸς αὐτοῦ. The noun γεννηματισμός is otherwise unattested, but is clearly derived from the verb γεννηματίζειν, which is Akylas's rendering of the Hebrew verb ינובון (from the same root as וניבו) at Psalm 92(91 LXX):15. The verb γεννηματίζειν is not attested in other Greek authors. Again, at Job 28:16 the Hebrew word כתם is glossed by ἰσπίλωμαν, which

[16] MANUSCRIPT 5.

[17] Akylas has the same rendering in Deut 28:20. Cf. Rashi *ad loc.*

(ignoring the euphonic initial ι and final ν) is the same as Akylas's rendering of the same Hebrew word at Isa 13:12, σπίλωμα. In both cases the Hebrew word, which literally means 'stain', is used in the paradoxical sense of 'refined gold'. The Greek word σπίλωμα is a unique and distinctive coinage of Akylas, derived from σπίλος, 'stain'.

On the other hand, the glosses are not simply derived from Akylas. In a few cases they are different from the attested renderings of Akylas (although it has to be said that there is sometimes a doubt about the attribution of renderings to Akylas in our sources). For example, at Job 28:15 סגור is glossed as μαλακτόν, 'malleable', where ἀπόκλειστον, 'closed', is attested as the reading of Akylas. Moreover, some glosses use Greek words first attested after Akylas's time, such as σαπούνιν (Mal 3:2), 'soap'.

There are two possible explanations: either the glossator copied the glosses from a translation (or from a previous glossary based on a translation) which, not unlike the Ecclesiastes translation, was closely modelled on Akylas but differed in some details, or he wrote down *ad hoc* translations based on his own profound familiarity with translations of this type. Either way, it is hard to escape from the strong sense of a tradition of translation underlying the glosses that was firmly rooted in the much older translation of Akylas.

Glosses on 1 Kings

A more developed form of glossary is illustrated in a small fragment, a single parchment bifolio, on 1 Kings 6:20–8:37.[18] Unlike the previous glossary, which is laid out in columns, this one is written as a continuous text, like a commentary. Both Greek and some Hebrew words are pointed. In addition to the Hebrew lemma and Greek gloss (or sometimes two alternative glosses), this glossator sometimes inserts brief exegetical notes about the meaning of the Hebrew, occasionally citing other biblical passages where a similar word is used. For example, after glossing the word מזבח (generally understood as 'altar') in 1 Kings 6:20 as πάτωσις, an otherwise unattested word presumably meaning 'floor', the glossator proceeds to connect it wth the cognate verb היזבחו in Neh 3:34, which he translates as μήτε πατώτουσιν;, 'will they floor?', and then adds that some translate it as μήτε στεγάσουσιν;, 'will they roof?'. There is no discussion of the reason for these two different translations, and no attempt to resolve the difference. It is this type of feature that characterises the text in front of us as a discursive glossary rather than a commentary.

[18] MANUSCRIPT 6.

Similar features are found in Hebrew-Old French glossaries.[19] Notable features of both are the use of explanations in Hebrew interspersed among the vernacular glosses, and the presence of two alternative glosses of the same lemma.

We may particularly remark a feature of the Old French glossaries that we often notice in the Greek ones, though not in this particular case, viz the choice of vernacular equivalents that echo the sound of the Hebrew, e.g. 1 Kings 6:21 ויעבר *èbarèya* ('and he bolted'), 1 Kings 6:36 טורי *tires* ('rows'), Ezek 37:6 וקרמתי *ècrèmerè* ('and I shall cover').[20] It remains to be investigated whether these similarities are attributable to direct influence of the Greek tradition on the French one.

At a number of points the glossary agrees with Akylas or one of the other ancient versions. For example, 7:27 המכונות τὰ ὑποθέματα (= Ak.); 8:7 ויסכו καὶ συνσκιάσειν (Ak. regularly renders סכך and its derivatives by συσκιάζειν and cognates); 8:13 בית זבול οἶκον οἰκητηρίου (Ak. οἶκον κατοικητηρίου); 7:9 מגוררת במגרה πριονισμένες ἐπριόνιν (Sym. πεπρισμένων πριόνι, Ak. πεπρισμένων ἐν πριστῆρι). Moreover, some of the word-formations are reminiscent of Akylas (e.g. θεμέλιωμα at 1 Kings 7:9; λαχανιασμός at 1 Kings 8:37). However, too little comparative material survives for us to form a clear idea of the character of the underlying translation, or rather translations (since there were clearly more than one).[21]

Scholia on Genesis and Exodus

From the more developed form of glossary just mentioned it is but a short step to the simplest and most rudimentary form of commentary, which may take the form of disjointed scholia explaining difficult words or phrases, or pointing up a particular meaning in the text. Such commentaries characteristically skip over large portions of text, including passages that might seem to have considerable intrinsic interest.

A good example from the Genizah is a substantial fragment of a sequence of mainly unconnected philological and exegetical notes on Genesis and Exodus, grouped according to the liturgical readings (*sidrot*).[22] Four consecutive parchment bifolios are preserved; probably one more bifolio completed the quire on the outside. Further quires could have extended the notes to the remainder of the Torah, perhaps also taking in the prophetic readings (*hafta-*

[19] Banitt, *L'étude des glossaires bibliques*.

[20] These examples are taken from Banitt, *Le Glossaire,* nos 1748, 1774 and 6411 respectively.

[21] See further Law, 'The use of the Greek Bible'.

[22] MANUSCRIPT 7.

rot) or indeed the rest of the Bible. The extant legible text runs from Gen 8:7 to Exod 34:26, omitting parts of the text sometimes extending to several chapters.

The author was a Rabbanite, as we can see from the frequent citation of rabbinic teachings.[23] Although he makes use of midrashic materials, his main concern is to elucidate the 'plain meaning' (*peshat*) of the biblical text. Israel Ta-Shma has shown that he is a forerunner of Rashi (1040–1105) and the French school of commentators.[24] It follows that he is to be dated earlier, perhaps around the turn of the millennium.

Greek glosses are used relatively lightly in the text; in addition there are some further glosses added above the line. Exceptionally, there are also a number of interlinear glosses written in Greek letters. (More will be said about this phenomenon later in this chapter.)[25]

Not much can be affirmed with confidence about the origin of the glosses in Hebrew letters. There is little to connect them to any known translation. Many of the words are medieval, and there are few clear parallels with other sources. A feature that was remarked on in the case of the translation of Kohelet, and that we shall have occasion to draw attention to with other documents, is the choice of Greek glosses that echo the sound of the Hebrew. An obvious example is the gloss on Gen 24:65 **צעיף**, τσίπα. The Hebrew word is usually understood to mean a veil; the Greek word normally designates a skin or membrane, and it is stretching its semantic field somewhat to use it of a woman's veil. Other examples are at Gen 24:2, where **ירכי**, normally explained as 'my thigh', is glossed by ὀρχιδίού μου, 'my testicle', and Gen 37:2 **נער**, 'young man', glossed as ἀναγέρνων μάχην, 'inciting to battle'. In each case the gloss is not indicating the plain meaning of the Hebrew word, but drawing out some implication rooted in the similarity of sound with the Greek.

There are some indications that an actual translation lies behind the glosses, and that they are not improvised renderings. For instance, in a scholion on Gen 49:10 the word **עד**, normally undertood as 'until', is glossed by the Greek word, of Latin origin, πραΐδα, 'spoil, booty', with a reference to Gen 49:27, where the word **עד** is indeed generally understood as having this meaning. It is hard to know what sense this interpretation makes of Gen 49:10; what is interesting from our point of view is the implication that **עד** in Gen 49:27 was translated by some as πραΐδα. The same gloss is found at Gen

[23] See Ta-Shma, *Studies* 3, 242; Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries', 245*–6*; Brin, *Reuel and his friends*, 14–16.

[24] Ta-Shma, *Studies* 3, 243–8.

[25] See also the remarks of Niehoff-Panagiotidis, 'Byzantinische Lebenswelt und rabbinische Hermeneutik', 61–5.

49:27 in the margin of the Christian Codex Ambrosianus, which will be dis-discussed below.

In the same verse, the word יקהת is glossed as μουδιασμός, 'numbness'. A Byzantine commentator, Jacob ben Reuben, writing in Hebrew, glosses the same word in Greek as τὸ μουδιᾶσαι, the aorist infinitive of the verb from which the noun μουδιασμός is derived. This verb, common in Modern Greek, is not attested in ancient Greek, so the gloss cannot originate in one of the older translations. It may well, however, come from a medieval translation. or tradition of glossing.

At Gen 49:11 the word שרקה is glossed as καλλίκαρπος, 'with beautiful fruit'. This word is mentioned by Jerome (d. 420), as one current translation of the cognate Hebrew word שרק in Isa 5:2. After citing the translation of Symmachos, he states: 'The Jews say that *sorec* is a type of excellent vine, that gives rich and perpetual fruit. Hence some people translate *sorec* by καλλίκαρπος, which we can render [in Latin] as "very beautiful fruit"'.[26] The gloss in the Genizah fragment surely derives from the same ancient exegetical tradition: שרקה is understood as the name of a type of vine, so called because of the excellence of its fruit.

This last instance, in particular, is too unusual to be explained away as due to mere coincidence, and taken together they lend some weight to the idea that the glosses are based on a translation, or at least a tradition of glossing, which had affinities with a much earlier tradition known to Jerome.

Scholia or a commentary on Genesis and Joshua

It is no big distance from such scholia to the fully-developed running commentary, indeed the Genizah provides us with an example of a (very fragmentary) text[27] combining both, a running commentary (in this case on the division of the land in Joshua 13) being inserted into a rather sketchy commentary that skips verses and even entire chapters. Very little remains of the folio on Genesis. The commentary on Joshua 13 has its own heading, 'Chapter of the Allocations (of territories)' (פרק נחלות). The text is basically in Hebrew, but there are occasional words in Greek. Not enough survives for us to deduce anything about their background. It has been suggested that the author may have been a Karaite.[28]

[26] Jerome, *Commentary on Isaiah* 5:2, ed. Adriaen, *CC* 73.64.

[27] MANUSCRIPT 8.

[28] Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries', 257*–260*, 262*.

A commentary on Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets

The most extensive Byzantine text relating to the Bible to have been recovered from the Genizah is a double commentary, on Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets.[29] The commentary was written on two parchment *rotuli*, scrolls written longways in a single column on each side. The *rotulus* format is not common (although other examples have been found in the Genizah). The writing is similar to that of a marriage document from Mastaura, a small town in the Maeander Valley in western Asia Minor, dated 1022.[30] While the similarity of hands is not a conclusive indication of date, it does at least strongly point to a date in the first half of the 11th century for the commentary too.[31] Even though a good deal of text has been lost, a very substantial amount remains.

At the end of the section on Ezekiel we read the name 'Reuel', and it seems likely that this is the author's name. Nothing more is known about him. It has been argued that the author, and the scribe (who are likely to have been one and the same), were Rabbanites, not Karaites.[32]

The commentary is noteworthy for its abundant use of Greek, even though the text itself is written in Hebrew. Greek words are used to translate Hebrew words in the biblical text, but also for other purposes, such as where the author apparently lacks the Hebrew vocabulary to say what he means. For example in an explanation of Ezek 13:18 he describes how hunters capture

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[29] MANUSCRIPT 9. At the end of the commentary on Ezekiel there is a line break, and the next line begins with an indented heading 'Book of the Twelve', apparently beginning a new commentary. Yet the handwriting and the style of commentary are unchanged. It seems legitimate therefore to consider this a single commentary, broken into two books. Some scholars, however, prefer to think in terms of two commentaries, or a 'double commentary'. See Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries', 244*.

[30] Cambridge University Library, T-S 16.374, de Lange, *GJT*, 1–10. Steiner, 'Linguistic aspects', 43 n. 13; *idem*, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries', 262*, cites expert opinion that the same scribe wrote both manuscripts.

[31] An earlier dating for the commentary (perhaps as early as the 9th century) is put forward by S. Jerchower, cited by Niehoff-Panagiotidis, 'Byzantinische Lebenswelt und rabbinische Hermeneutik', 56–7, 69 n. 38. (See also the remarks of Niehoff-Panagiotidis, *ibid*., 71.) Aslanov, 'Les gloses judéo-hellénistiques', dates it to the tenth century or earlier; Grossman, 'The impact of Rabbi Samuel', 458, dates the manuscript to the tenth century or earlier, perhaps relying on Aslanov's view. Grossman also opines that Reuel may be the name of the copyist rather than the commentator, and therefore implies an even earlier date for the commentary. None of these proposals resposes on any concrete arguments.

[32] Steiner, 'Linguistic aspects', 43; *idem*, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries', 260*–2*. Ta-Shma, *Studies* 3, 242, thinks it likely but not certain that the author was a Rabbanite.

migrating quails: 'for he who hunts τὰ ὀρτύκια (quails), how does he catch them? He takes an ἀνάπλι (a blanket) . . .'.

The actual biblical glosses display many similarities with Akylas and the other ancient translations, but the similiarities are less marked than in the texts we have been looking at so far. A good number of the glosses have no known parallel either in the ancient translations or in the medieval ones. However, there are agreements with the attested readings of Akylas, Symmachos and Theodotion, as well as the Septuagint. Let us consider a few examples.

Ezek 8:3 **הקנאה** τοῦ ζήλου. Ak., Th. τοῦ ζήλους. The word was lacking in LXX, and was added by Origen from Th.

Ezek 10:5 **כקול** ὡς βροντή. Sym., Th. (ὡς) βροντή. Ak. unknown. LXX ὡς φωνή.

Ezek 21:3 **להבת** φλόγα. LXX φλόξ. The Three unknown.

Ezek 21:14 **חרב הוחדה וגם־מרוטה**. Two different translations are offered of **הוחדה**: ἠκονήθη and ὠξύθη. The first translation of **מרוטה** is lost, and the second is damaged: only ἐνεδι- can be read. LXX ὀξύνου καὶ θυμώθητι. The translations of the Three are lost, but in verse 16 **למרטה** is translated ἐξεσπασμένην by Sym. and ἠκονημένην by Ak. (from the same verb as the first translation of **הוחדה** in the Genizah commentary). Some influence of the ancient translations (Ak. and perhaps LXX) is possible, though the situation is confused. As for **חרב**, the commentary glosses it as μάχαιρα, which seems to have been the translation of Sym., LXX ῥομφαία. Ak. is unknown: elsewhere he uses either Greek word, and it is impossible to know which one he used here.

Ezek 21:29 **יען הזכרכם** γιὰ νὰ μνημονε[. Although damaged, this seems very close to Sym. διὰ τὸ μνημονευθῆναι. LXX ἀνθ' ὧν ἀνεμνήσατε. Ak. is unknown here, but wherever we have his rendering of **הזכיר** it is a form of ἀναμιμνήσκειν, and so far as we know he never used μνημονεύειν.

Joel 1:14 **אספו** συλλέξατε. LXX συναγάγετε. Ak. is unknown here, but it is a peculiarity of Akylas that he regularly replaces συνάγειν by συλλέγειν to translate this Hebrew verb.[33]

Taken together, this all seems more suggestive than decisive. There seems to be some influence from the ancient translations, particularly Akylas, but it is difficult to prove. At the same time, the very distinctive word-formations and translation equivalents of Akylas seem to be avoided.

[33] Barthélemy, *Les devanciers*, 86.

A commentary on 1 Kings

Very different in character is a fragment of a commentary on 1 Kings, running from 1 Kings 7:25 to 10:21.[34] We have four parchment bifolios; a fifth bifolio may have completed the quire on the outside. The manuscript is carefully written, and is clearly copied from another written text. The commentary has been compiled from various sources, and there are indications that the author was an Arabic-speaker, although from his use of Greek glosses it is clear that he also knew Greek and was writing for Greek-speakers like himself. Richard Steiner has demonstrated that he was a Karaite, and has identified him with Tobias ben Moses, about whom a certain amount is known. [35]

As there is some overlap with the glosses on 1 Kings mentioned earlier, we are in a position to compare the Greek glosses in the two texts. Interestingly enough, while in some places the two have different glosses, in others they translate the same Hebrew word by the same Greek one. For example at 7:29 they both translate the Hebrew לִיוֹת by πετόνια, 'spouts'. Again, at 7:50 מִזְמְרוֹת is glossed by θυμιατοί, 'censers'. What this seems to suggest is that both draw on current translations, but that there was not a single standard translation.

Biblical commentaries written in Hebrew but containing Greek glosses are found outside the Genizah as well. We shall return to this subject at the end of the chapter.

Glosses in Greek letters

Before leaving the Genizah fragments, we should take a brief look at some Hebrew manuscripts that have glosses added in Greek letters. We remarked in the last chapter on the general tendency for Jews to abandon the use of Greek letters in favour of Hebrew ones. The Genizah has now provided evidence that this process was incomplete. One example has already been mentioned: the scholia on Genesis and Exodus discussed above are written in Hebrew, but they have some glosses in Greek letters added later between the lines. There are also two Hebrew biblical fragments that display the same phenomenon.[36]

The orthography of the notes is phonetic, and reveals a lack of Greek education. For example, in the scholia on Genesis, at Gen 48:14, the word

[34] MANUSCRIPT 10.

[35] Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries', 246*–57*.

[36] One is a fragment of Proverbs (17:16–19:3) with four such glosses, MANUSCRIPT 11. The other is an unpublished fragment of Judges: MANUSCRIPT 12.

ἄλλαξεν, 'he changed', is written αλακσεν.[37] All the glosses in question are written in a form of majuscule Greek writing, not the minuscule script used by Christians. Several talmudic manuscripts from the Genizah have glosses in a similar hand.[38]

This surprising discovery suggests that somewhere some Jews continued to use the Greek alphabet for writing Greek, isolated from Christian circles. (If they had learnt to write Greek from Christian teachers they would presumably have learnt the minuscule script.) A comparison of the manuscripts shows that several people were involved. Clearly they were not cut off from Hebrew language, and hence from Hebrew education, since they were able both to read and to write Hebrew. We cannot date the phenomenon, except to note that the Greek annotations must be later than the Hebrew manuscripts on which they are written. These may be dated approximately to the 11th century. There is no indication of locality.

The evidence discussed so far comes from the Cairo Genizah, but we have important evidence from elsewhere from the same period. To this we shall now turn.

Glosses to the Former Prophets

In the year AM 5403 (AD 1642/3) a certain Abraham ben Na'aman Malati bought a damaged copy of the Former Prophets in Candia (present-day Heraklion or Iraklio, Crete), at that time under Venetian rule, and took it to Egripon (present-day Chalkis or Halkidha, Evia), a former Venetian colony then ruled by the Ottomans, where he dedicated it in the synagogue, 'for the lives of his sons'. We know nothing more about Abraham Malati, or his reasons for dedicating the damaged manuscript in the synagogue. The manuscript itself is now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.[39]

The manuscript is of parchment, and has been dated approximately to the 11th or 12th century.[40] In the margins there are 123 Greek glosses written in Hebrew letters, as well as some Hebrew comments.[41] The glosses tend to be grouped together in clusters: while there are 39 each on Joshua and 2 Kings there are only ten on Judges and none at all on 2 Samuel. They are not all the work of one person: we can distinguish four different hands, two of them

[37] For more examples and discussion see Niehoff-Panagiotidis, 'Byzantinische Lebenswelt und rabbinische Hermeneutik', 61–4.

[38] See de Lange and Tchernetska, 'Glosses in Greek script'.

[39] MANUSCRIPT 13.

[40] Olszowy-Schlanger, 'An early Hebrew manuscript', 155.

[41] De Lange, 'The Greek glosses'; Sznol, 'The Greek glosses'.

very neat and perhaps close in date to the manuscript itself, the others quite crude and probably from a later period.

It is not clear what criteria governed the choice of words to be glossed, or why some passages are glossed while most are left unglossed. Some of the words glossed seem quite straightforward; sometimes the same word is glossed twice in different places, even after a short interval. It is equally unclear why such a beautifully written biblical manuscript was defaced with annotations (especially those written in a crude scrawl). Perhaps this has to do with the damage suffered by the manuscript, which left it incomplete and no doubt detracted from its value or holy status. (We have no idea when this damage occurred, except that it was before November 1477, the date of a deed of sale written on the last page of the manuscript in its present incomplete state.)

The simplest hypothesis is that the manuscript was used as a study text by a group or succession of teachers, or students, who annotated it. (The different hands tend to be found in different parts of the manuscript: for example the thirty-nine glosses on 2 Kings are all by the same hand.) It is tempting to think that the earlier, neater notes were made by teachers and the later, rougher notes by students. One of the two neat hands belongs to a very experienced and skilled scribe, who may be the very person who wrote the *masora*. That is surely more likely to be a teacher (or a scholar making notes for his own benefit) than a student. The participation of students would help to explain why some of the glosses are apparently very straightforward, why we sometimes find two alternative translations of the same word, and why in some cases the glossator seems to have misunderstood what he was told.

The fact that we twice find alternative translations of a single Hebrew word is particularly interesting, as it points to different traditions of translation or even two written translations:

1 Kings 22:38 **והזנות** καὶ τὰ ἅρματα *or* καὶ τὰ ’μπροστοκόρβεα.

2 Kings 8:15 **המכבר** τὸ σπουγγάριν, *others say* τὸ προσκεφαλίδιν.[42]

We also find the same word glossed in the same way more than once, e.g. Josh 7:5 and 10:11 **במורד** ἐν κατηφόρῳ; Josh 11:3, 8 **מצפה** περιλωπή; Josh 15:9, 18:14 **ותאר** καὶ ἐστοχάστη.

The question naturally arises whether we can detect a specific translation or translations behind the glosses, or whether we should suppose that they were made up on the spur of the moment. The fact that the same translation or a similar one occurs more than once is not conclusive proof, because someone improvising a translation may well have certain equivalents in his mind. The fact that several glosses agree with the Aramaic Targum[43] proves nothing more than that the glossator, or his teacher, had access to the Targum,

[42] On these glosses see Sznol, ‘The Greek glosses’, 33 and 35.

[43] For examples see *ibid.*, 34–5.

which would not be surprising. Interestingly, several of the glosses can be paralleled in the Constantinople Pentateuch (to be discussed in the next chapter).[44] More indicative perhaps are some agreements with ancient Greek translations. Some examples follow:

Josh 10:25 **ואמצו** καὶ καρτερέσετεν. LXX καὶ ἰσχύετε. Ak. is not known here, but he consistently uses the verb καρτερεῖν to translate **אמץ**.

Josh 13:21 **נסיכי** κατασταμένους. LXX ἄρχοντας. Ak. is not known here, but cf. Ezek 32:30 LXX οἱ ἄρχοντες, Ak. οἱ καθεσταμένοι, Sym. οἱ χριστοί; Micah 5:5(4) LXX δήγματα, Ak. καθεσταμένους, Sym. χριστούς, Th. ἀρχηγούς.

Josh 17:10 **יפגעון** ἀπαντήσουσιν. Cf. Isa 47:3 **אפגע**: LXX παραδῶ, Ak. ἀπαντήσω, Sym. ἀντιστήσεταί μοι.

In these and other cases there is a clear influence of Akylas, and Akylas alone among the ancient translations. It would be wrong, however, to assume that Akylas is the sole source. Leaving aside the many occasions when a medieval Greek word is used, the glosses occasionally differ from Akylas and agree with another ancient translation:

1 Sam 17:5 **ושריון קשקשים** καὶ λιρίκι ἁλυσιδωτό. LXX καὶ θώρακα ἁλυσιδωτόν, Ak. φολιδωτόν, Sym., Th. λεπιδωτόν. λιρίκι is a medieval loan-word from Latin *lorica*. ἁλυσιδωτό, however, is an ancient word, and it is the translation found in the Septuagint here. It is not a common word in Greek, but its meaning is fairly plain. It comes from ἅλυσις, 'a chain', a word that is attested in the sense of a link in chain armour. The LXX's phrase, ἁλυσιδωτός θώραξ, thus means a breastplate or cuirass of chain mail: the expression is used in this sense by Polybius (6.23.15) and other authors. The Three, for whatever reason, opted for different adjectives. How much the more surprising, then, to find the rare word ἁλυσιδωτός turning up in a medieval Jewish gloss, particularly because in the Hebrew **קשקשים** is a noun, the second limb in a construct, and one might have expected the glossator to have used a noun too. It is hard to believe that the source of the gloss is anything other than the Septuagint.[45]

A noteworthy feature is the presence of some glosses that do not make much sense in Greek, but that closely resemble the Hebrew words glossed:

Josh 10:21 **חרץ** ἐχάραξεν.

Josh 20:43 **כתרו** καθαριάρισαν.

1 Sam 13:20 **קרדמו** τὸ χαρδοῦβι αὐ(τοῦ).

In the opinion of Shifra Sznol[46] these are not translations but transliterations. This term needs to be modified in the light of the fact that in two instances verbs are conjugated, rather than simply transcribed. It is hard to imagine a

[44] For some examples see de Lange, 'The Greek glosses', 146.

[45] This is also the view of Boyd-Taylor, 'Echoes of the Septuagint'.

[46] Sznol, 'The Greek glosses', 33–4.

scholar or student consciously writing down nonsense, so unless the words in question are genuine Greek words that happen not to be attested elsewhere, it may be best to suppose that these examples represent an ingenious attempt by a translator to find or invent a Greek equivalent approximating to the sound of the Hebrew. The linguist Julia Krivoruchko has commented as follows on this phenomenon:

> In a school setting, acoustic similarity facilitates initial memorization of equivalents. Subsequently, it reinforces the perception of a commonality of semantic space between two languages in the minds of trained (i.e. multicompetent) individuals. This, in turn, has many added benefits: better understanding of the semantics of Hebrew, and thus more proficient exegesis, and better performance as a traditional translator.[47]

A similar procedure can be exemplified from Akylas.[48] It is not suggested that the words used in the glosses come from Akylas: it may simply be that a similar device has been adopted by the translator of the glosses.

To sum up, it seems virtually certain that an actual translation or translations lie behind many or possibly all these glosses. The strongest influence we can detect is that of Akylas, but other ancient translations (specifically the Septuagint) also play their part.

Jewish glosses in Christian biblical manuscripts

The Ambrosian Library in Milan houses one of the great old majuscule biblical codices.[49] It is an incomplete copy of the Hexateuch, beginning at Gen 31:15 and breaking off at Josh 12:12. On the basis of the script it has been dated to the early fifth century. By the late eleventh century the manuscript had become worn out with use and age, and an ambitious and far-reaching project of restoration was undertaken.[50] At the same time large numbers of marginal notes were added, some of them citing 'Hexaplaric' readings (from Akylas, Symmachos and Theodotion), and others showing striking similarities with the Jewish glosses which interest us.[51] Three times (once on Gen 47:31 and twice on Exod 16:31) these annotations are preceded by the note τὸ ἰουδ', clearly short for τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν, 'the Jewish (sc. text or translation).'[52] Specialists in the text of the Greek Bible have given the codex

[47] Krivoruchko, 'Medieval and early modern Judaeo-Greek biblical translations', 166.

[48] See the examples in Field's *Hexapla*, Prolegomena, xxiii.

[49] MANUSCRIPT 14.

[50] Fincati, 'Per la storia'; *eadem*, 'Some remarks'.

[51] Similar glosses have been found in two other Christian manuscripts, MANUSCRIPT 15, 16.

[52] The same reference is found twice in the margin of MANUSCRIPT 16, at Gen 40:9 and 43:11.

the siglum F, and the annotations are collectively referred to as F^b.[53] The general tendency of the annotations is to bring the Greek biblical text into line with the MT.

While many of the variant translations found in F^b can be paralleled in the fragments of the *Hexapla*, many others have no known parallel. This fact is remarkable and invites investigation of the possible source or sources of the latter. The abbreviation τὸ ἰουδ' points firmly to a Jewish source. The general tendency, already indicated, is to bring the Greek into line with the MT,[54] for which the glossator and his source clearly had great respect. The latter, at least, must have been either a Hebrew text or (ultimately) a Greek translation prepared by someone who knew Hebrew.

In a few cases we find striking parallels with the Jewish sources we have been looking at. For example, the rendering καλλίκαρπος for שרקה in Gen 49:11, already mentioned as occurring in a Genizah fragment, and paralleled much earlier in an unnamed translation mentioned by Jerome, is also found in F^b. This is the only other place where such a gloss occurs. As mentioned above, the rendering πραΐδα for עד in Gen 49:27 cited in the same Genizah fragment is also found in F^b, and this rendering is not attested anywhere else. The Septuagint and the entire Christian interpretative tradition opts to understand the Hebrew word as 'still' (ἔτι).[55]

At Exod 16:14 the manna is described in the Hebrew as מחספס, a word of uncertain meaning. F^b glosses it with the variant ἀνασυρόμενον, 'stripped' or 'exposed', which is close to the gloss found in the palimpsest glossary described in the last chapter, (ἀν)εσυρμένον. The source of this interpretation may well be Symmachos,[56] but the parallel is still suggestive.

There are a couple of parallels with the Genizah commentary on Ezekiel and the Twelve Minor Prophets. At Ex 4:11 F^b has βωβόν for Hebrew אלם, 'dumb', as against LXX δύσκωφον. This rendering is not found anywhere else except (in the plural) in the Genizah commentary, at Hab 2:18. Again, at Exod 6:6 F^b has εἰς τὸ βέβαιον, 'for sure', where the LXX has βάδιζε, 'go!' Two different Hebrew words underlie these very different renderings: the LXX probably translates לכה, 'go!', while F^b follows the MT reading לכן. This word is normally translated 'therefore', but the gloss understands the

[53] The siglum F^a is given to various earlier revisions. A further siglum, F^h, is used for a continuous text which was inserted into the account of the building of the Tabernacle in Exodus (Exod 36:3–39:13 MT, 36:3–26 LXX), at a point where the original text of F had been lost. On the latter see Wevers, 'A secondary text'; Fincati, 'Some remarks', 430–3.

[54] In a small number of cases the notes have the opposite effect, possibly because the glossator or his source had a different Hebrew text, or misread the Hebrew.

[55] These examples are discussed, in greater detail, together with a third parallel in Exod 18:2, by Boyd-Taylor, 'The Greek Bible', 34–8.

[56] See Salvesen, 'The Relationship of LXX and the Three', 112–13.

element כן as meaning 'certain'. The same unusual translation is found in the Genizah commentary, on Zeph 3:8.[57]

Two very clear parallels are found in the glosses to Joshua in the Fitzwilliam manuscript.[58] At Josh 10:4 the enigmatic Hebrew word השלמה is glossed in the Fitzwilliam manuscript as εἰρήνευσεν, '(he) made peace', clearly on the basis of a connection with Hebrew שלום, 'peace'. This is virtually the same gloss as F^b εἰρήνευσαν, '(they) made peace'. (The implied plural subject comes from the context.) This interpretation is strikingly different from LXX αὐτομόλησαν, '(they) deserted'.[59]

At Josh 10:19 both have exactly the same gloss on Hebrew וזנבתם אותם: καὶ οὐραδοκοπήσετεν αὐτούς, 'and cut off their tails'. In meaning this is not very different from LXX καὶ καταλάβετε τὴν οὐραγίαν αὐτῶν, but the use in the two medieval witnesses of an unusual compound verb is striking and surely beyond the bounds of coincidence. The effort to render the Hebrew verb by a single word in Greek is reminiscent of Akylas and the *kaige* tradition, but we do not have any Hexaplaric parallels at this point.

There is one other feature of F^b that cannot be overlooked: the very large number of glosses that agree with a later Jewish source that will be considered in the next chapter, the Constantinople Pentateuch.[60] These cannot possibly be due to accident, and are a clear confirmation of the Jewish character of much of F^b.

To summarise: the material in F^b comes from various sources; some of them are clearly Christian, but a very substantial amount is of Jewish origin. It is impossible to determine how many Jewish sources there were. At least one Jewish source was known to the annotator as τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν, 'the Jewish (translation, or other source)'. This was closely related to the source of other Greek materials that we have considering, which are written in Hebrew characters.

This last point deserves further consideration. As we have seen, Jews in the Middle Ages normally wrote Greek in Hebrew letters, but a few Jews, at least, were capable of writing in Greek letters. There is a possibility that the *Ioudaïkon* was a Jewish translation or glossary written in Greek letters. The older it was, the greater the likelihood that Greek script was used; the later it was the greater the likelihood that it was written in Hebrew letters. In this case the Christian annotator (or possibly a predecessor or assistant) will have

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[57] De Lange, *GJT,* 281. The beginning of the phrase (presumably εἰς) is missing in the fragment: only τό βέβαιον can be read. See the discussion in Fincati, 'Il restauro medievale', 72 and 123–4.

[58] De Lange, 'The Greek glosses', 145–6, Boyd-Taylor, 'The Greek Bible', 32–4.

[59] Boyd-Taylor, *ibid.*, 33, remarks that this gloss may be Hexaplaric in origin, as this rendering occurs elsewhere in the ancient translations, and is attested in Akylas.

[60] Fernández Marcos, *Introducción*, 189–90.

had to transcribe the glosses into Greek letters, and of course must have been capable of reading Hebrew letters. This was probably an unusual accomplishment for a Christian scholar in the 11th century, as there is no evidence of any teaching of Hebrew in Christian schools. However, the annotator was an exceptional scholar, who had a strong motive for learning Hebrew, given his evident commitment to bringing the Greek text of the Bible into line with the Masoretic Hebrew. There are a few indications of Greek Christians learning Hebrew in the Middle Ages. As mentioned earlier, St Constantine (Cyril), before setting out to convert the Slavs, learnt Hebrew, and other Semitic languages, in Constantinople.[61] No further information is offered, such as whether he taught himself, or hired a teacher, or attended a regular class; as the biographer does not consider the matter worthy of explanation he may not have thought it exceptional for a Christian to study Hebrew.

At a later period, in the 14th century, we have the example of the so-called *Graecus Venetus*, a Greek translation of the Pentateuch and some other biblical books made directly from the Hebrew and showing knowledge of the grammatical work of the 13th-century Jewish scholar David Kimhi, itself written in Hebrew.[62] It has been argued that the translator was Simon Atumanus, the Latin bishop of Thebes,[63] and it has been further suggested that he may have been a convert from Judaism.[64]

How about the annotator of the Codex Ambrosianus: was he a convert from Judaism? The possibility cannot be ruled out. If he were, it would be easy to explain his knowledge of Hebrew, his familiarity with the current Jewish translations, and his commitment to the Hebrew Bible. However, since there is nothing distinctively Jewish about his handwriting, it may be that he had an assistant who was a converted Jew.

A dictionary of rabbinic Hebrew

Nathan ben Yehiel was born in Rome ca 1035, and died ca 1110. His monumental dictionary of the rabbinic literature, the *Arukh*, was completed, by his own account, in March 1101.[65] Among other languages and a wide range of subjects, Nathan displays an interest in Greek words, both as attested

[61] Vlasto, *The entry of the Slavs*, 34 n. b.

[62] See most recently De Crom, 'The Book of Canticles'.

[63] Mercati, *Se la versione*.

[64] Aslanov, 'La place du Venetus Graecus', followed by De Crom, 'The Book of Canticles', 299–301.

[65] On the book and its editions, see Brisman, *History and Guide*, 15–25. The critical edition is Kohut, *Aruch completum*, with a supplement by Krauss et al., *Additamenta*.

in the rabbinic writings themselves and in the course of discussions of He-Hebrew or Aramaic expressions. Sometimes he cites medieval Greek glosses, which he tends to call **לעזים**, using them to shed light on the meaning or etymology of rabbinic terms. On a number of occasions he attributes these glosses to 'Akylas', and some of them are demonstrably derived from Akylas's translation.[66]

On a few occasions it is reasonable to suppose that Nathan's glosses are taken from medieval Jewish translations. This possibility was first mooted by Solomon Judah Rapoport (1790–1867).[67] Rapoport adduced a number of examples. The word **חלה**, 'ill', in Gen 48:1 is translated ἀσθενής, or alternatively ἄρρωστος. ἀσθενής, which properly means 'feeble' or 'delicate', is a term used by the Rabbis, from the Mishnah on, whereas ἄρρωστος is a translation used elsewhere by the Three. LXX here employs a euphemistic verb, ἐνοχλεῖται 'is troubled'. The translation of **שדי** by ἱκανός, attested as a rendering of the Three at Isa 13:6 and elsewhere, is reported by Nathan as still current in his day. (It is found in F^b and the Constantinople Pentateuch.) Most interesting perhaps is Rapoport's view that it was from a current translation that Nathan knew the translation κάρταλλος for **טנא** in Deut 26:2–4. This is the word used in LXX, whereas Akylas used ἀγγεῖον and we find κόφινος in F^b and καλάθι in the Constantinople Pentateuch. This appears to be yet another indication of the influence of the Septuagint on the medieval translations.

Greek glosses in biblical commentaries from Byzantium

The use of Greek words within Hebrew texts is by no means confined to the Genizah fragments described above. It is a common feature of all sorts of texts from Byzantium.[68] It is particularly common in biblical commentaries, by both Rabbanite and Karaite authors.[69] Biblical words and phrases are frequently glossed by a Greek equivalent. Often mentioned in passing, such Greek glosses have never been subjected to systematic study, with a view to determining whether they derive from translations or were improvised by the commentators. Such a study would be well worth undertaking.

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[66] Sznol, 'Medieval Jewish Greek lexicography'.

[67] *Bikkure ha-'Ittim* 10 (1829), 28 [*non vidi*]. His argument is summarised by Blondheim, 'Échos du judéo-hellénisme', 2. See also Boyd-Taylor, 'Echoes of the Septuagint', 199.

[68] De Lange, 'Hebrew/Greek manuscripts'. Besides biblical commentaries, we have commentaries on rabbinic texts and on liturgical hymns. The Genizah has also preserved a fragment of a polemical work: de Lange, 'A fragment of Byzantine anti-Christian polemic'.

[69] Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries'.

Among Rabbanite authors the best-known example of such a commentary is the *Lekah Tob*, a commentary on the Pentateuch and the Five Scrolls, by Tobias ben Eliezer, who wrote probably in Thessalonike at the end of the 11th century and the beginning of the 12th.[70] The *Lekah Tob* is often described as a 'midrash', referring to the large amount of older midrashic and aggadic material that it reuses, but in fact it also has the form of a commentary, and has every right to be considered an early example of the commentary genre in Byzantine Judaism.[71]

Tobias's younger contemporary Samuel of Rossano in southern Italy also uses Greek words in his commentary on the Pentateuch.[72] Unlike the *Lekah Tob* this interesting work left barely a trace in the contemporary or subsequent medieval Hebrew literature.

Among Karaite commentators we have already mentioned Tobias ben Moses, in the context of the Genizah fragment of his commentary on 1 Kings, which has been attributed to him. Tobias has been described as 'the first important scholar produced by the Byzantine Karaite community'.[73] He was a Karaite of Constantinople in the eleventh century, who spent some time in Jerusalem, as a member of the 'Mourners of Zion', an ascetic group which was also a brilliant centre of scholarly creativity. While he was in Jerusalem he studied biblical exegesis and other subjects under the guidance of a well-known Karaite scholar named Yusuf al-Basir. The Karaite scholarly literature with which he became familiar was written in Arabic. After returning to Constantinople in the 1040s was closely involved in, and indeed may well have initiated, a project to translate some of these classic Karaite writings from Arabic into Hebrew for the benefit of Byzantine Karaites who did not know Arabic. Indeed, he is sometimes referred to as 'the translator' (המעתיק).[74] Among his exegetical works is a massive compilation on Leviti-

[70] Ta-Shma, '*Midrash Leqah Tob*'. Bádenas de la Peña, 'Aproximación', 12, associates the success of Tobias's work with its Greek glosses, with the contemporary origins of medieval literature in colloquial Greek. This judgment is problematical: it overlooks the earlier history of such glosses, as well as the existence of the same phenomenon in other languages elsewhere in the Jewish world. Bádenas also exaggerates the amount of Greek in Tobias's commentary: he speaks of 'traducción de muchos pasajes del texto bíblico', whereas in fact Tobias's glosses are sparsely scattered through his work, and confined to a word or two each time.

[71] The 12th-century commentator Abraham Ibn Ezra, in the introduction to his Commentary on the Pentateuch, famously mentions the work by name in deriding the commentaries of the Byzantine Jews, which he considered excessively midrashic.

[72] Ta-Shma, '*Sefer Rossina*'. On the Greek words see Sperber, 'Contributions to Byzantine lexicography'; *idem*, 'The non-Hebrew words in *Sefer Rossina*'.

[73] Frank, 'Karaite exegetical and halakhical literature', 530.

[74] Ankori, *Karaites in Byzantium*, 449; *idem*, 'The correspondence of Tobias ben Moses'; Frank, 'Karaite exegetical and halakhical literature'; Akhiezer, 'Byzantine Karaism'.

cus, the *Otsar Nehmad*, which is based on Arabic commentaries, notably one by Yefet ben ʻEli, which is itself a compendium of the exegesis of other Karaite scholars.

Jacob ben Reuben's *Sefer ha-ʻOsher*, an 11th- or 12th-century biblical commentary, is also largely based on the Arabic exegetical works by Yefet ben ʻEli and others, as well as some earlier Byzantine sources, from which the many Greek glosses in it are thought to be derived.[75] In many cases these are explanations of the Hebrew rather than straightforwarded glosses, and they are mainly written in medieval vernacular Greek, making it unlikely that they are taken from the ancient translations. Sometimes two alternative glosses are offered, and while in some cases the madrashic abbreviation ד״א (אחר דבר), 'a different interpretation', is used, perhaps with the implication that the two Greek words represent different exegetical understandings, in other cases it is possible that two translations or traditions of glossing are involved. (Admittedly it is not easy to distinguish between two interpretations and two translations, since any translation is also an interpretation.) Some of the glosses are intriguingly similar to those found in other sources: for example, as already mentioned, he glosses the word יקהת at Gen 49:10 with τὸ μουδιάσαι, 'to be numb', where the Genizah scholia on Genesis and Exodus mentioned above have the cognate noun μουδιασμός. Again, at Ezek 13:20 כסתות is glossed by σακκούλια, just as in the Genizah commentary described earlier.

In some cases there are hints of the influence of one or more ancient translations. For example:

Gen 3:8 לרוח היום τὸ κατάψυχον. LXX τὸ δειλινόν, Ak. ἐν τῷ ἀνέμῳ τῆς ἡμέρας, Sym. διὰ πνεύματος ἡμέρας, Th. ἐν τῷ πνεύματι πρὸς κατάψυξιν τῆς ἡμέρας. What is remarkable about the parallel with Theodotion is that κατάψυξιν ('cooling down') is an exegetical expansion of the Hebrew, that simply says 'to the breeze of the day' (represented in Theodotion's translation by ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῆς ἡμέρας). Commentators and translators are divided about whether this denotes the afternoon or the evening (LXX could mean either).[76] Jacob ben Reuben himself cites an alternative interpretation, אחר הצהרים, 'the afternoon', which he glosses as εἰς κατὰ μίαν. His term τὸ κατάψυχον can refer to a cool region to the far west of the earth, but here it surely refers to the cool of the day, i.e. the evening. The echo of Theodotion seems unmistakable.

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[75] Frank, 'Karaite exegetical and halakhical literature', 532; Ankori, *Karaites in Byzantium*, 196–8. In Ankori's view, even if the author wrote in the 12th century, the Greek glosses he cites belong to the 11th.

[76] Jerome, *Quaestiones hebraicae in Genesim,* 3, *in plerisque codicibus latinorum pro eo quod hic posuimus* ad uesperam, post meridiem *habet, quia* τὸ δειλινόν *graecum sermonem ad uerbum transferre non possumus*.

Gen 4:26 הוחל ἤρχηθεν. LXX ἤλπισεν, Ak. ἤρχθη. The LXX 'He (Enosh) hoped to invoke the name of God' translates a slightly different Hebrew text. Jacob's rendering, 'Then it was begun', agrees with Akylas's, but this may be due to coincidence.

Gen 6:9 התהלך ἐπεριπάτησεν. LXX εὐηρέστησε, Ak., περιεπάτει, Sym. ἐπηκολούθησεν. Jacob's gloss agrees with Akylas alone among the ancient translators. (LXX says that Noah was pleasing to God; Symmachos that he followed God; only Akylas says that he walked with God.)

In addition to these compilations by named authors, there are numerous anonymous Karaite exegetical writings containing Greek glosses, many of which have not yet been published, and none of which has been systematically analysed. Taken together with the analogous Rabbanite works they constitute an invaluable resource for the study of Byzantine Jewish exegesis, including the tradition of glossing in vernacular Greek language.

Concluding remarks

Despite the fragmentary character of the evidence marshalled in this chapter, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Greek translations of the biblical books were used in the teaching and study of the Hebrew Bible throughout the period in question. The evidence does not come from a single place or a limited time-span. So far as we can tell it is widely spread both geographically and chronologically.

The emphasis in this period is firmly on the Hebrew text, and Jewish education and worship are now clearly based in a Hebrew-language culture, but the spoken language of these Jews is Greek, and it is through the medium of Greek that they learn Hebrew and study the scriptures. We have seen some evidence of a limited and informal use of the Greek alphabet.

It is hard to judge from this limited body of evidence to what extent written copies of Greek translations were used, but we have at least one example of such a copy (the fragment of Kohelet/Ecclesiastes). It is most unlikely that other written copies did not exist. We have seen references in Christian manuscripts to a 'Jewish' text, which was probably also a continuous written translation. In some cases, however, it is equally possible that what lies behind the glosses is a tradition of glossing in a certain way, that is to say that the teacher gives a translation which is also an interpretation, and which may be ultimately based on an oral tradition of translating. Ultimately it does not much matter whether a translation was written or orally transmitted: in either case we have observed examples of renderings that go back to the ancient translations, chiefly but not exclusively Akylas.

Chapter 7

After the Latin conquest

Historical background

The two and a half centuries from the Latin conquest of Constantinople on 12–15 April 1204 to the Ottoman conquest of 29 May 1453 are commonly categorised as a period of fragmentation, decline and inexorable eclipse.

From a purely political point of view this judgment is no doubt justified, but culturally the period was a remarkably rich one, for the Jews as well as for the dominant Christians. It is also the period in Byzantine Jewish history for which we have the most information. In large part this is due to the abundance of written sources: from the beginning of the 14th century we begin to have dated Byzantine Hebrew manuscripts, and very substantial numbers of undated ones.[1]

Although political fragmentation is a pronounced feature of the period, with territories changing hands frequently among Greek, Latin and Slav, and eventually Turkish, rulers, for our present purpose it makes sense to think of Greek-speaking Jews, wherever they lived, as sharing a single culture. As it happens, much of our information about them comes from the Venetian-ruled islands of Crete and Negroponte. While their culture was certainly marked in some respects by western influences, they also shared a great deal with Byzantine subjects, in Anatolia, Constantinople or Thessalonike, or in Epiros. In fact, very often we are unable to ascribe a particular Jewish text for certain to a specific political entity.

We know the names of dozens of Byzantine Jewish scholars of the 12th–15th centuries,[2] and we must also be struck by the large number of Hebrew manuscripts with colophons stating that they were copied for the scribes' own use.[3] Large numbers of Hebrew synagogal hymns survive, testifying to their

[1] According to Beit-Arié, *Hebrew Codicology*, Table 4, there are 276 extant dated Byzantine Hebrew manuscripts, constituting 10% of the total number of dated medieval Hebrew manuscripts. The number of undated Byzantine manuscripts may run into thousands.

[2] Bowman, *The Jews of Byzantium*, 130–64.

[3] See Beit-Arié, *Hebrew Codicology*, Table 13.

authors' learning.[4] Among this mass of scholarly creativity we may single out a few names for special mention.

Aaron ben Joseph 'the Physician' (also referred to as 'the Elder', to distinguish him from his younger contemporary Aaron ben Elijah), was one of the most celebrated Karaite authors of his period. He was born around 1250 in Crimea, and later lived in Constantinople; he died in 1320. A prolific author, he edited the Karaite prayer book (to which he contributed many of his own compositions) and a code of law, as well as a Hebrew grammar, but it is as a biblical commentator that he is best known. His commentary of the Pentateuch, *Sefer ha-Mivhar*, was completed in 1294. He also wrote a commentary on the Former Prophets and Isaiah, entitled *Mivhar Yesharim*, and another on the Psalms. A commentary on Job is lost. Although steeped in the work of his Karaite predecessors, he is also thoroughly at home in Rabbanite writings. His commentaries focus mainly on the plain meaning of the text, but also incorporate midrashic interpretations, mainly borrowed from Rashi.[5] There are many places in Aaron's commentaries where his Hebrew interpretations are identical with those supposed by the Greek glosses in the texts we have been studying.[6]

Meyuhas ben Elijah is only known to us as the author of a commentary on the Pentateuch preserved in a single manuscript, written in a Byzantine hand in 1468/9 by a scribe named Elijah ben Elkanah from Nikopolis, and a commentary on Job. The commentaries contain many glosses in Greek. We know nothing about the author beyond this clear indication of his Byzantine origin. He has been variously dated between the 12th and the late 16th century; most recently Israel Ta-Shma has suggested a date in the first half of the 14th century.[7] His main concern is to elucidate the plain meaning of scripture, which he does using the tools of Hebrew grammar. He has a particular interest in legal issues.

Shemariah ben Elia 'the Cretan' was born in Crete ca 1260, but in 1279 he married Helena, daughter of David Kalomiti, a prominent Jew of Negroponte, and went to live in that other Venetian island.[8] In a letter to the Jews of Rome[9] he explains that he has written commentaries on all twenty-four books of the Bible except for Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. He gives an indication of the size of the various sections, from which it transpires that he was particularly expansive in writing about the Psalms and the three books

[4] See Weinberger, *Jewish hymnography*, esp. 193–367.
[5] See Frank, 'Karaite exegetical and halakhic literature', 536–41.
[6] See the examples in de Lange, 'The Greek glosses'.
[7] Ta-Shma, 'The history of rabbinic literature in Greece', 215.
[8] See de Lange, 'Shemariah ben Elia'.
[9] English translation in Bowman, *The Jews of Byzantium,* 255–62.

ascribed to King Solomon, namely Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs. He explains his method as a commentator: he insists that he never practises what we would call textual criticism, but accepts the text as it is, and always links any deeper meanings he finds in the word of Scripture to its straightforward meaning as established by the rules of grammar. Nor has he introduced midrashic interpretations into any of his commentaries. Shemariah also mentions that in his earlier career he has translated philosophical works, presumably from Greek to Hebrew. Although Shemariah was a Venetian subject, his native language, in common with other Cretan Jews, was Greek, as is clear from the way he introduces Greek words in his Hebrew writings, such as the letter just mentioned.

Judah (or Leon) ibn Moskoni considered himself a pupil of Shemariah. Born in Ochrida in 1328, he was little more than a child when he studied at the feet of the octogenarian Shemariah, and after his death Judah continued to travel in search of learning, and of manuscripts. He claims that he found close on thirty commentaries on Abraham Ibn Ezra, whose rational and grammatical commentaries were dear to the hearts of the Byzantine Jewish scholars.[10] He also collected manuscripts of the *Yosippon*, on the basis of which he edited the text.[11]

Very few of the abundant Christian sources shed any light on our subject. The most promising of these is the *Debate against the Jews* (Διάλεξις κατὰ Ἰουδαίων) of Nikolaos of Otranto (also known as Nektarios of Casole), written between 1220 and 1223.[12] Born in Otranto in the late 1150s, Nikolaos entered the monastery of Casole ca 1205 and took the name of Nektarios; he became the abbot of the monastery in 1219 and died there in 1235. He knew Greek and Latin, and even a little Hebrew (not much, to judge by the transcriptions of biblical verses that we find in the *Debate*). In 1205–7 he accompanied Cardinal Benedict of Santa Susanna on a papal mission to Constantinople, at that time under Latin rule (Nikolaos is a key witness to the presence of Jews in the city in the period after the Latin conquest). Although the mission was primarily aimed at talks with the Greek Church, Nikolaos reports that he also debated with leading Jewish scholars, both Rabbanite and Karaite, not only in Constantinople but also in Thessalonike and Thebes, on theological subjects. The *Debate* is a literary work, composed several years later; it has been suggested that it is based on a debate that took place in

[10] See de Lange, 'Abraham Ibn Ezra and Byzantium', with further remarks in *BJGS* 17 (Winter, 1995), 20. An English translation of Judah's account of his travels and discoveries is in Bowman, *The Jews of Byzantium*, 283–5.

[11] *Ibid.*, 134–7; Dönitz, 'Historiography', 963–7.

[12] For the date, and a summary of the contents, see Hoeck and Loenertz, *Nikolaos–Nektarios von Otranto*, 82–8. Edition: Hoffmann, 'Der antijüdische Dialog'; Διάλεξις κατά Ιουδαίων, ed. Chronz.

Otranto, where we know that there was a long-established Jewish community, but that suggestion is not found in the work itself, and it is just as likely that the material it contains was derived mainly from the debates that took place during his various journeys to the east.[13] According to Nikolaos, the Jews discussed among themselves in Hebrew, and occasionally quoted biblical verses in Hebrew, but his discussions with the learned Jews are represented as taking place in Greek. The text he cites is essentially the Septuagint, although he is aware of the history of the translations by Akylas, Symmachos and Theodotion.[14] For all that it is a literary reconstruction, the *Debate* offers a glimpse into the rarified milieu of the disputations, a milieu in which Jewish scholars will perforce have had to acquire familiarity with Greek Bible translations as used by the Christians. Disappointingly, the work does not shed any light on specifically Jewish translations known to the Jewish interlocutors.

Among the many Hebrew manuscripts of this period are considerable numbers of prayer books, in which we can study the development of local prayer rites. It was only with the introduction of printing, in the generations following the end of the Byzantine empire, that the various rites were codified and canonised; they developed over many centuries, in isolation and in contact. The Byzantine or Romaniote rite has Palestinian antecedents, and in its turn it fed into other rites, notably those of Italy and Ashkenaz. The political fragmentation that marks our period is one of the main reasons for the development of distinct offshoots, notably the rites of Corfu, Castoria, Kaffa (Crimea) and Crete. Basically similar, the various rites are distinguished by differences of liturgical ritual, and particularly by different selections of hymns (*piyyutim*).[15]

The precise extent of the use of Greek in the synagogue liturgy is impossible to judge. The prayer books are all couched in Hebrew, with some Aramaic prayers sanctioned by long usage, but Greek prayers do make an occasional appearance. For example, a number of prayer books from the 15th century and later have the announcement of the New Moon in Greek as well as Aramaic.[16] A Hebrew hymn by Shemariah ben Elia for the Rejoicing of the Torah contains a number of titles of God that are wholly or partly in Greek ('Creator of the κόσμος', 'King τῶν πάντων', 'παντο-κράτωρ', 'Ruler of the

[13] Patlagean, 'La "Dispute avec les Juifs"'. See also Jacoby, 'The Jewish Community of Constantinople'; von Falkenhausen, 'The Jews in Byzantine Southern Italy', 289–90; Schiano, 'Il *Dialogo contro I guidei*'.

[14] He owned MANUSCRIPT 16, which contains numerous annotations from the Jewish tradition. See Fincati, 'Τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν', 98–9.

[15] See Weinberger, *Jewish Hymnography*, esp. 14–18, 193–366.

[16] Niehoff-Panagiotidis and Hollender, 'Εχομε ראש חדש'. The same formula occurs in Cambridge, University Library, MS Add. 542, datable to the 15th–16th century: see de Lange, 'Hebrew/Greek manuscripts', 265.

οὐρανοί'), with the peculiarity that the Greek nouns are declined to suit their grammatical context.[17] These divine titles may well reflect a use of Greek in Jewish prayer that has otherwise left few traces.[18] Particularly interesting is the Greek translation of the Book of Jonah, recorded in two manuscripts containing the liturgy for the Day of Atonement.

The Book of Jonah in Greek

The Book of Jonah is the prescribed prophetic reading for the afternoon service of the Day of Atonement, followed immediately by three verses of Micah (7:18–20). We learn from a responsum of Meir ben Isaac Katzenellenbogen (ca 1482–1565) of Padua that in Crete there was an old custom of reading the first three verses of Jonah in Hebrew, then reading the whole of Jonah in Greek, followed by the verses of Micah in Hebrew and Greek. Elijah Kapsali (ca 1485–1550), the leading rabbinic authority of his day in Crete, wished to eradicate this custom as having no basis in law. Meir Katzenellenbogen agreed that it was a strange custom, but urged his colleague not to ban it but rather to seek arguments in favour of maintaining it, which he subsequently did.[19]

Only two manuscripts preserve this vernacular reading. One is now in Oxford, the other in Bologna. Neither contains any indication of date or provenance, but both can be dated to our period.[20]

The Oxford manuscript (MANUSCRIPT 17) is a small format parchment codex of 345 folios, containing the services for the festivals of Passover, Pentecost, New Year, Day of Atonement, Tabernacles and the Rejoicing in the Torah. The reading of Jonah begins (on fol. 220r) with the first verses of the book in Hebrew, followed by the entire book in Greek. At the end Mic 7:18–20 is written in Hebrew only. At the beginning of most, but not all, verses of the Greek the opening word or phrase is written in Hebrew, usually in smaller letters, combining square and semi-cursive forms, but sometimes in full-sized square letters; in several verses the Hebrew is lacking, and in a couple of cases it has been added in semi-cursive characters in the margin. The use of these Hebrew markers seems haphazard.

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[17] See de Lange, *ibid*.

[18] Cf. an early Genizah fragment, Cambridge, University Library, T-S 8H 22.4, where a Hebrew hymn has a Greek refrain.

[19] Meir Katzenellenbogen, Responsa, no. 78; cf. Lattes, *De vita et scriptis*, 22.

[20] MANUSCRIPTS 17, 18. The text is edited by Hesseling, 'Le livre de Jonas'. I am grateful to Giacomo Corazzol for helpful discussion, particularly of the Bologna manuscript.

The Bologna manuscript (MANUSCRIPT 18) is a medium-sized parchment codex of 278 folios, containing the prayers for Pentecost, New Year, Fast of Gedaliah and Day of Atonement. The reading of Jonah occupies fol. 249v–252r. It begins with the first three verses of Jonah in Hebrew, followed by their Greek translation. Then each verse of Jonah is written first in Hebrew, then in Greek, in Hebrew letters (with the exception of 4:4 and 5, which are run togeher). Mic 7:18–20 is written in Hebrew only. At the end of the codex are various notes bearing dates in the 16th century and related to Canea and Candia, the two main Jewish communities in Crete. One is a note of the death of Moses Kohen son of Shabbetai Kohen Protouli of Canea, followed by an elegy in his memory by Abraham ben Judah Balazza, an owner of the manuscript; another is a list, by the same hand, of seventy Jews who died in an epidemic in March 1592.

The two texts of Jonah are essentially the same, although they present many differences of detail. The language has some features of medieval vernacular Greek, but includes a number of ancient words that were no longer part of the spoken language in the Middle Ages, such as ὕδωρ ('water') or μέγας ('great'). We can observe some development in this respect: whereas the Oxford manuscript has the archaic-looking ἐχτύο (cf. ancient Greek ἰχθύς) for 'fish', the Bologna manuscript has the later form ψάρι, which is still current in Modern Greek. The method of translation, which clings very closely to the diction of the Hebrew, gives the Greek a curious air, and often removes it from the ambit of spoken Greek. We have already observed something of this style of translation in the Ecclesiastes fragment, but the translator of Jonah has one peculiar technique: he preserves the original gender of an adjective or participle even at the cost of disagreement with the accompanying noun. The literal rendering of Hebrew idioms contributes to the strangeness of the translation. The essential similarity between the two texts shows beyond any doubt that we are not dealing with spontaneous translations but with a more or less fixed tradition. At the same time it is not a tradition that is scrupulously respected: changes are freely admitted, and they seem to tend in the direction of current vernacular Greek. The literal, word-for-word character of the translation, however, is maintained. It is not impossible that the translation underlying these two late manuscripts was made several centuries earlier (when words like ὕδωρ and ἰχθύς were still part of the current language). This is the easiest explanation of the presence of archaic-looking words and forms. It would seem, then, that while the basic principle of word-for-word translation embodied in this older text was respected down the generations, great freedom was tolerated in the actual wording used. This would be consistent with the notion that a similar style of word-for-word translation was practised in the educational system. Jews brought up to translate the biblical text word for word, respecting its grammatical peculiarities and idioms, would find nothing strange about

reading out such a translation in synagogue, even while consciously or unconsciously eliminating other features (such as vocabulary) that had come in time to seem outlandish or outmoded. Such a scenario is consistent with all the medieval sources we have considered so far.

As David Blondheim was the first to point out, the translation preserves some renderings of Hebrew words that are strongly reminiscent of the ancient translations, specifically the Septuagint and Akylas. He mentions the occurrence in our text of words derived from peculiar usages of Akylas, such as ἐλαφρύνεσθαι for קלל, 'to be light' (1:5), καταφέρομαι for נרדם, 'fall asleep' (*ibid.*), or λαίλαψ, λαιλαπίζειν for סער, 'storm', 'be stormy' (1:4, 11, 13).[21]

Particularly striking is the translation at 4:6 of קיקיון, a kind of climbing plant, by κολοκυθέα, a gourd or marrow, a word that is directly descended from the Septuagint's κολοκύνθη.[22] As it happens the other ancient translations did not follow the Septuagint's choice: Akylas, with Theodotion, apparently transcribed the Hebrew as κικεών, while Symmachos opted for 'ivy', κισσός. There seems to be some foundation, therefore, for thinking that our text preserves an element from the Septuagint tradition. It might be objected that the word in question is simply a normal medieval Greek word for 'gourd', and that the similarity with the Septuagint is due to coincidence. However, there is an exegetical issue that needs to be considered as well, namely the identification of the plant in question. Symmachos, as we have seen, preferred to use the word for 'ivy', and he was followed by Jerome, who added, however, that it was not really an ivy, but that no other word was available.[23] Some medieval Jewish commentators identified the plant with an oil-producing plant called קיק, on the basis of a passage in the Babylonian Talmud.[24] This plant was generally identified with the *Ricinus* or castor oil plant: for example a Hebrew-Greek glossary of the Mishnah from the Genizah glosses קיק as κικνέλαιον, i.e. κικινὸν ἔλαιον, 'castor oil'.[25] Other Jewish commentators offered various identifications, against which Abraham Ibn Ezra insisted that there was no need to identify the plant. In the face of these various interpretations, we might claim that the Jonah translator's

[21] Blondheim, 'Échos du judéo-hellénisme', examples no. 20, 30 and 33.

[22] *Ibid.*, no. 32. See Boyd-Taylor, 'Echoes of the Septuagint', 202–3.

[23] Jerome, *Commentary on Jonah*, *ad loc.*, *secutique sumus ueteres translatores, qui et ipsi haederam interpretati sunt, quae Graece appellatur* κισσός*: aliud enim quod dicerent non habebant.* According to Jerome all the ancient translators, and not just Symmachos, used κισσός, whereas Field, in his *Hexapla*, prefers the testimony of a 'hexaplaric' manuscript that Akylas and Theodotion transcribed rather than translated the Hebrew. If Jerome is correct that would in no way affect our argument.

[24] B. *Shabbat* 21a, commenting on Mishnah *Shabbat* 2.1.

[25] De Lange, *GJT*, 298.

identification of the plant with a gourd or marrow plant is itself in the tradi-tradition represented by the Septuagint.

If we did not have the responsum of Meir Katzenellenbogen mentioned earlier, we might perhaps suppose that the translation was written in the prayer books simply to help worshippers to follow a reading in Hebrew, despite the telling fact that the Hebrew text is not given in the Oxford manuscript. (The fact that in the case of no other prescribed reading in these manuscripts is the Greek translation supplied would also demand some explanation.) Taking all the evidence together, however, it seems impossible to escape the conclusion that, as Meir Katzenellenbogen says, the translation was read aloud, and indeed that this was an ancient custom.[26] On the other hand, we can probably take it that it was a local custom, since neither Katzenellenbogen nor Kapsali mentions that it was practised elsewhere. This implies that the translation originated in Crete, but other possibilities cannot be excluded.

Finally, the different treatment of the Greek translation in the two manuscripts points to two different types of reading: in one, short opening and closing readings in Hebrew frame a reading of the whole of Jonah in Greek alone, while in the other (a kind of compromise) each verse of Jonah is read first in Hebrew and then in Greek.

A glossary to the Prophets

One of the most extensive and important documents relating to our subject is an incomplete glossary to the Former and Latter Prophets.

The manuscript is a small format paper codex, of which thirty-three folios are extant.[27] The paper has an Italian watermark that dates it to the mid-14th century. Dialectological considerations suggest an origin in the Black Sea region, perhaps in the area of Trebizond.[28] It is an informal compilation, writ-

[26] According to an ancient rabbinic text, Tosefta *Meg*. 3.13, in a synagogue of Greek-speakers (לעוזות), if there is someone present who is able to read Hebrew he should begin and end in Hebrew: see Smelik, *Rabbis, language and translation*, 178. This is exactly what we find in the Oxford manuscript. In both manuscripts, following the prescription in the Tosefta, the concluding verses from Micah are given in Hebrew alone: apparently these were not read in Greek. In Katzenellenbogen's description the Greek translation of the Micah passage is also read; Dr Corazzol, in a private communication, has suggested to me that Katzenellenbogen misunderstood Kapsali's words.

[27] MANUSCRIPT 19. I am grateful to Irina Levinskaya and Dmitri Bratkin for their help during my visit to St Petersburg which enabled me to discover and study this manuscript. The manuscript is to be published with a commentary by Krivoruchko, *The late Byzantine Hebrew-Greek glossary*. In the meantime see *eadem*, 'A fourteenth-century glossary'.

[28] *Eadem*, unpublished seminar paper.

ten by several hands. It contains a Hebrew and Greek glossary to the Prophets, the extant portions running from Judg 7:3 to Jer 16:16, with some missing portions. It resembles the glossary on 1 Kings from the Genizah (MANUSCRIPT 6) in that it is set out in continuous text, and includes Hebrew explanations as well as Greek glosses. The glosses are written in Hebrew letters, mainly unpointed. There are large numbers of additional glosses and comments above the lines and in the margins. The glossator appears to have collected glosses from earlier sources and perhaps added other glosses of his own, sometimes giving several (up to five) glosses of the same Hebrew lemma.

Despite a gap of several centuries in date, we find some striking similarities between the glosses in this glossary and those in the earlier glossaries from the Genizah, such as those on Malachi and Job (MANUSCRIPT 5) or on 1 Kings (MANUSCRIPT 6). While not overlooking some cases where the two glossaries have different glosses to the same word, we can hardly fail to be impressed by agreements such as these with the 1 Kings glossary:

1 Sam 6:12	ותשרנה (הפרות): καὶ ὤρθωσαν, '(the cows) went straight'.[29]
1 Kings 7:23	עגל : στρογγύλον, 'round'.[30]
1 Kings 7:29	ליות : πετόνια, 'spouts'.
1 Kings 7:36	מער : ἀσκημοσύνη(ν), 'private parts'.[31]
1 Kings 7:46	במעבה : ἐν πάχωμα(ν)/ἐν παχώματα, 'in thickening(s)'.[32]
1 Kings 8:27	יכלכלוך : ἐπιχωροῦν σε/ἐπιχωροῦσίν σε, 'contain you'.[33]

Too little can be read of the palimpsest glossary in Isaiah-Jeremiah (MANUSCRIPT 3) for a comparison to be feasible.

There are, however, interesting agreements between the glosses and the other document we have examined that covers some of the same biblical books, namely the Fitzwilliam Museum glosses (MANUSCRIPT 13). Here are some examples:

Judg 15:8	שוק על־ירך: πεξὸν και καβαλ[λάρη], 'infantry and cavalry'.
1 Sam 13:21	ולהציב: καὶ τοῦ μανικώσειν, 'and to fix'.[34]

[29] In 6 the gloss is given as part of a comment on 1 Kings 6:35. In 19 the spelling is ὄρτωσαν, but this is an insignificant difference.

[30] This is the regular equivalence in the Septuagint, followed by Akylas.

[31] This rendering is found in Akylas at Nahum 3:5. The Greek word is also used by the Three to render Hebrew ערוה.

[32] The first rendering is that of 19, the second that of 6, which has a plural form.

[33] The 3rd person pl. ending in -οῦν gradually replaced the older ending in -οῦσιν from the 10th century. Both forms are found together in a Passover *haggadah* from the Genizah (*GJT*, no. 5, 29–41). Here, as we would expect, 6 has the older form, 19 the later one.

1 Sam 17:5	ושריון: καὶ λιρίκι(ν), 'and a cuirass'.[35]
1 Kings 22:38	והזנות: καὶ τὰ ἅρματα, 'and the weapons'.[36]
2 Kings 8:15	המכבר: τὸ σπουγγάριν, *others say* τὸ προσκεφαλίδιν, 'the sponge, the pillow'.[37]
2 Kings 10:22	המלתחה: τὸ βεστιάριν, 'the wardrobe'.[38]

These few examples serve to demonstrate, once again, the connection that exists with the earlier glosses in the Fitzwilliam Museum manuscript, notwithstanding the many cases where the two texts have different glosses. Particularly telling is the double gloss on 2 Kings 8:15, but in the other cases, too, the similarities are so precise that it is hard to ascribe them to coincidence.

On a number of occasions we find a gloss that connects with the ancient translations. In most cases the obvious connection is with Akylas, e.g. Jer 4:24 התקלקלו: ἐλαφρώθησαν, Jer 3:3 ומלקוש: καὶ ὄψιμον, Jer 4:1 ולא תנוד: μήτε σαλευθῇς, Jer 2:12 ושערו: καὶ λαιλαπιστεῖτεν. Occasionally the closest parallel is with the Septuagint. A good example is at Jeremiah 1:6, אדני: δέσποτα. No other known source has this rendering, and we cannot trace the process by which this ancient translation reappeared in a Jewish text of the 14th century.

The St Petersburg manuscript has many glosses which do not figure in the earlier texts, or which are different from those found in them. Often, as we have said, it gives two or more glosses for the same word: probably it draws on a number of sources, including glossaries, or perhaps translations, which also underlie the earlier texts.[39]

The two sources we have examined so far in this chapter are very different in nature. One is a translation, the other a glossary. One, we have suggested, comes from Crete; the other is of unknown provenance. They do not share any distinctive linguistic or exegetical features. (It is a pity the glosses do not extend to Jonah, so as to enable us to make a direct comparison.) The glossary is more evidently connected to the other glossaries that we have looked at. The translation of Jonah, on the other hand, shares its philosophy

[34] In 19 this gloss is an alternative, written in the margin. In the text there are several glosses on this word and the rest of the verse which have no parallel in 13.

[35] Again, the gloss is written in the margin of 19. In the text there is a gloss on the following word, קשקשים, which is different from that in 13.

[36] 13 also has an alternative gloss, which is not found in 19.

[37] 19 also has another alternative gloss, and adds the Aramaic translation from the Targum, גונבא, translated as 'blanket'. Sznol, 'The Greek glosses', 35, suggests that σπουγγάριν here means 'blanket' rather than 'sponge', which she says does not make sense in the context.

[38] There is an alternative gloss in 19, which has no equivalent in 13.

[39] Krivoruchko, 'A fourteenth-century glossary', 84–7.

of translation, which puts a high premium on fidelity to the 'strangeness' of biblical Hebrew diction, with the only other translation we have considered so far, that of Ecclesiastes, even if there are also striking differences which may be due, at least in part, to representing a local and somewhat marginal tradition.

A translation of the Pentateuch

The last text we have to consider is a Greek translation of the entire Pentateuch. It is thus by far the largest document in our *dossier*, and its importance for the study of the history of the Jewish tradition of translation is uncontested and inestimable.[40] What is open to question, however, is its date.

The text has come down to us only in a book that was printed in Constantinople in 1547 by the Italian Jewish printer Eliezer Soncino, a member of the most famous family of Hebrew printers.[41] The book contains the Hebrew Masoretic Text, flanked by two translations, one into Spanish and the other into Greek. At the top of each page is the Aramaic Targum of Onkelos, and at the bottom the commentary of Rashi.[42] (The same printer had produced a similar book the previous year, containing the Masoretic Text, Onkelos, and Rashi, with translations into Arabic and Persian.) The Spanish and Greek texts are printed in pointed Hebrew letters, each verse being preceded by its opening word in Hebrew, an ancient practice which we have already witnessed in the Greek translation of Ecclesiastes and the Bodleian Jonah.

The key questions as far as our investigation is concerned is whether, as some believe, the Greek translation was a recent creation, perhaps made specially for Soncino's publication (in which case it falls outside the chronological framework of our enquiry by a century), or whether, as others have maintained, it is a medieval translation.

The title page of the book gives no indication of the authorship or origin of either the Greek or the Spanish translation; the printer simply states, 'we decided to print in it the translation of the Scripture into the Greek tongue and the Spanish (literally 'foreign', לעז) tongue, the two languages commonly spoken by the sons of our people . . . who dwell in the Turkish lands'.[43]

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[40] See particularly Blondheim, 'Échos du judéo-hellénisme', Fernández Marcos, *Introducción*, 187–92, *idem*, 'El Pentateuco griego'.

[41] On the Soncino family see Soava, *Dei Soncino*.

[42] The most important recent studies, with references to earlier work, are Fernández Marcos, 'El Pentateuco griego' and Krivoruchko, 'The Constantinople Pentateuch'.

[43] The text is reproduced *ibid*., 262. The English translation here is my own.

Lazare Belléli, the author of the first serious studies of the Greek translation,[44] pointed out the complete absence of Turkish words in it, and considered the inference that the translation was made some time before the publication, indeed before the Ottoman conquest. He dismissed it, however, arguing that the absence of Turkish influence could be explained by reference to the total separation of Greeks and Turks during the early phase of Ottoman rule. He cited the example of his own homeland, Corfu, where some fifty years of British rule had left hardly any trace on the local spoken Greek. He therefore maintained that the translation had been made shortly before the book was printed.[45]

D. C. Hesseling, who published a transcription of the entire Greek text into Greek letters,[46] agreed that the only evidence for the date (and place) of origin comes from the language. He maintained, against Belléli, that there were several words of Turkish origin in the translation.[47] Citing the view of J. Perles[48] that an oral tradition probably lay behind the printed text, Hesseling regretted that he was unable to pursue this line of investigation, rabbinic literature being a closed book to him.[49]

Natalio Fernández Marcos, in a careful study of the Greek translation, describes it as a 'monument of the Greek spoken in 16th-century Constantinople'.[50] Elsewhere he admits the difficulty of describing the state of the language that it reproduces. He calls it 'a monument of the common language at the end of the Middle Ages', adding that it is closer to the southern than to the northern dialects.[51] More recently he has reformulated his view: 'Although it reflects the Greek which was spoken in Constantinople in the middle of the 16th century, the fact that not a single word of Turkish is found in it is proof that it has its origin in an earlier tradition, one that is for the most part unknown to us due to the fact that eastern Greek culture disappeared before the invention of the printing press'.[52]

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[44] Belléli, 'Une version'; *idem,* 'Deux versions'.

[45] *Ibid.*, 257–8. The opinion is quoted without comment by Steinschneider, 'Allgemeine Einleitung', 735.

[46] Hesseling (ed.), *Les cinq livres.*

[47] *Ibid.*, VI. From an omission due to homoarcton in Num 31:18 Hesseling deduced that the printed text was based on a written or printed model, but he does not develop this argument, nor does he venture a date for the model.

[48] Perles, 'Jüdisch-byzantinische Beziehungen', 575 n.

[49] Hesseling (ed.), *Les cinq livres*, V–VI n.

[50] Fernández Marcos, 'El Pentateuco griego', 203. On p. 192 he attributes this view to Belléli.

[51] Fernández Marcos, *Introducción*, 188.

[52] *Idem, 'Non placet Septuaginta',* 45. The Greek dialectologist Georges Drettas, on the other hand, has argued that the dialect of the translation is western, and more specifically originates in Corfu or Ioannina: Drettas, 'Le Corpus judéo-grec', 132–3.

This view is not inconsistent with that articulated by J. G. Krivoruchko, who considers both the Greek and the accompanying Spanish translation as לעזים, that is, popular versions, which functioned mostly orally, but could be committed to writing should the need arise. In all probability, both Greek and Spanish texts 'were created *ad hoc* on the basis of oral performance, although the use of translation aids (e.g. glossaries and continuous texts) during their production cannot be excluded'.[53]

The latest studies, then, while giving full weight to the translation in its published form as a work of the mid-16th century, also admit the presence of traditional elements. As we shall see in what follows, the role of these elements can hardly be exaggerated.

The authorship of the translation, like that of the Spanish, is, as already mentioned, unknown. At the end of the Pentateuch, two names are mentioned: Avigdor ben Eliezer Tsarit Ashkenazi under the Greek column and Joseph ben Isaac Kohen under the Spanish. It is possible that these are the names of the translators,[54] although they may be the printers. The question has often been raised whether the Greek translation was made by a Karaite or a Rabbanite.[55] The very plain, literal character of the translation would admit of either possibility. It might well be thought that Karaites would not be interested in a publication containing Rashi's commentary, and the Spanish translation is certainly not Karaite (Spanish not being a language of Karaites anywhere). However, there is nothing explicitly Rabbanite about the description of the work on the title page, and one imagines that the printer will have wished to maximise sales by any means available. By 1547 Byzantine Karaites had become much more open to rabbinic tradition than their early forebears, and indeed some of the leading Karaite scholars of the time had studied under Rabbanite teachers.[56] In the absence of any explicit information, we should reserve judgment on the Karaite or Rabbanite origin of the translation and of possible Karaite interest in the publication.[57]

Most specialists who have pronounced on the matter consider that the aim of the publication was, primarily at least, educational,[58] and this is indeed what the title page proclaims ('in order to be of benefit to the young of the

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[53] Krivoruchko, 'The Constantinople Pentateuch', 275–6. The author has returned to the question of the language of the Pentateuch, in *eadem,* 'Medieval and early modern Judaeo-Greek biblical translations'.

[54] As suggested by Belléli, 'Deux versions', 252 n.

[55] The view of Richard Simon and others that the Greek translation was made by Karaites and printed for their use, while the Spanish translation was intended for Rabbanites, is dismissed by Wolf, *Bibliotheca Hebraea*, vol. 2, 440–8, and Belléli, 'Deux versions', 250–1.

[56] Attias, 'Un temps'; *idem*, 'Karaïtes et Rabbanites'.

[57] So Fernández Marcos, 'El Pentateuco griego', 188.

[58] Belléli, 'Deux versions', 251; Krivoruchko, 'The Constantinople Pentateuch', 274–5.

children of Israel'). However, the wording goes on to mention the weekly public reading of the Torah, and we cannot rule out the possibility that the book was intended not only for the schoolroom but also for the synagogue, to help congregants to follow the Hebrew reading. Printing the first Hebrew word of each verse before the Greek might be thought of as a helpful device in this regard. In any case, one cannot draw a sharp distinction between study and performance: the primary purpose of Jewish education was to prepare boys to follow the synagogue prayers and readings, and eventually to read in public themselves.[59]

Like the translations of Ecclesiastes and Jonah, the Greek translation of the Pentateuch clings very closely to the diction of the Hebrew. There are many features of the translation of the Pentateuch that are not grammatical in Greek, some familiar from the earlier translations and some peculiar to it. Like the earlier translations, it tends to omit the article where, owing to the grammatical construction, it is lacking in Hebrew (e.g. Gen 1:1, εἰς ἀρχὴ, Gen 3:2 ἀπὸ καρπὸ δέντρο τοῦ περιβόλι), but it does not do so consistently. Among the singular peculiarities of this text are the words ἄπατα, which stands for the Hebrew גם or אף, meaning 'also', 'moreover', and ὅς, an indeclinable word standing for Hebrew אשר, 'that' or 'which'.[60]

Careful comparison with the earlier translations reveals a large number of similarities, as Blondheim's study makes plain.[61]

Although it has been claimed that there are no signs of influence of the LXX,[62] in fact there are striking similarities. The following examples are chosen from the beginning of Genesis, where we happen to have Akylas's translation: the comparison reveals that the Constantinople Pentateuch is much closer to LXX than to Akylas:

Gen 1:1

CP: Εἰς ἀρχὴ ἔπλασεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸ καὶ τὴν ἡγῆ

[59] De Lange, 'Jewish education'. Arar, 'Le Pentateuque de Constantinople (1547)' even suggests that the translation was read aloud, with cantillation. Fernández Marcos differs from most investigators in seeing the aim of the publication as being primarily liturgical and only secondarily educative: 'El Pentateuco griego', 187. He rightly insists, however, that (unlike the LXX) it 'never broke away from or replaced the Hebrew text; it was merely considered as an instrument to understand the Hebrew ('*Non placet Septuaginta*', 46).

[60] See further Belléli, 'Une version', 292–5, Hesseling (ed.), *Les cinq livres*, VII–VIII.

[61] Blondheim, 'Échos du judéo-hellénisme'.

[62] Hesseling (ed.), *Les cinq livres*, II, 'qui est tout à fait indépendante de la traduction des Septante'. He adds in a note that he has been unable to find traces of a relationship with the other old translations incorporated in the *Hexapla*.

LXX: Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν[63] ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν
Akylas: Ἐν κεφαλαίῳ ἔκτισεν θεὸς σὺν τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ σὺν τὴν γῆν

Gen 1:4
CP: καὶ εἶδιεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ φῶς ὅτι καλό, κ' ἐχώρισεν ὁ θεὸς ἀνάμεσα τὸ φῶς καὶ ἀνάμεσα τὸ σκότο
LXX: καὶ εἶδεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ φῶς ὅτι καλόν, και διεχώρισεν ὁ θεὸς ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ φωτὸς καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σκότους
Akylas: [καὶ εἶδε]ν θεὸς τὸ φῶ[ς ὅ]τι ἀγαθόν . . . διεχ[ώρισεν] θεὸς μετοξὺ φω[τὸς] καὶ μετοξὺ τοῦ [σκότο]υς

It will be seen that at several key points CP agrees with LXX against Akylas. Again, at Gen 1:5, where little of Akylas survives, CP μέρα μνιά follows LXX ἡμέρα μία rather than Akylas ἡμέρα πρῶτη. Such examples could be multiplied. Whether the influence of LXX represents a survival from ancient times or is due to recent interference is an intriguing question that deserves further investigation.[64]

On the other hand, there are also many places where CP agrees with Akylas against LXX. For example, at Gen 1:16 Heb. **לממשלת** is rendered in CP by ιὰ ξούσιασμα, which is reminiscent of Akylas, Theodotion εἰς ἐξουσίαν, rather than LXX εἰς ἀρχάς or Symmachos εἰς τὸ ἡγεῖσθαι.

Similarly at Gen 1:18 for **למשל** CP has ιὰ νὰ ξουσιάζουν, which is close to Akylas ἐξουσιάζειν. LXX has ἄρχειν.

Gen 4:7: CP ἂν ἀγαθύνῃς for Heb. **אם תיטיב** is virtually identical to Akylas, Symmachos ἐὰν ἀγαθύνῃς. LXX understands the Hebrew differently.

Gen 24:11: CP ἐγονάτισεν = Aklyas. LXX has ἐκοίμισεν.

Gen 41:44: CP ὑψώσῃ = Akylas ὑψώσει. LXX has ἐξαρεῖ.

Gen 49:21: CP ἀλαφῖνα ἐπεστειλμένη = Akylas ἔλαφος ἀπεσταλμένος. LXX has στέλεχος ἀνειμένον.

There are also numerous agreements between CP and the Ambrosian Codex (MANUSCRIPT 14). Sometimes they both agree with Akylas or another ancient translation; at other times they are late words that cannot have been used by an ancient translator. Thus they are highly unlikely to be due to coincidence. For example:

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[63] One manuscript has ἔπλασεν, like CP, but it dates from the 17th century and so could have been influenced by Jewish tradition.

[64] Aslanov, 'The Judaeo-Greek and Ladino columns', 391, describes it as 'a revision of the Septuagint text in a more vernacular and literal way'. Krivoruchko, noting that this judgment is based on a limited sample, remarks that it 'would require a thorough reexamination of the totality of the text' ('The Constantinople Pentateuch', 258).

1. Gen 42:37: Heb. תמית, CP = 14 θανατώσῃς. LXX ἀπόκτεινον.
2. Gen 43:30: Heb. החדרה, CP κελλάρι, 14 κελλα[. LXX ταμεῖον.
3. Gen 49:9: Heb. כרע, CP ἐγονάτισεν, 14 ἐγονάτισας. LXX ἀναπεσών, Ak. κάμψας, Sym. ὀκλάσας.
4. Gen 49:19: Heb. גדוד יגודנו, CP φουσσάτο νὰ τὸν φουσσατέψῃ, 14 φοσσάτον φοσσατευ[ ] .[65] LXX πειρατήριον πειρατεύσει αὐτόν, Ak. εὔζωνος εὐζωνήσει, Sym. λόχος.
5. Exod 4:11: Heb. אלם, CP = 14 βωβόν. [66] LXX δύσκωφον, Ak., Sym., Th., μογιλάλον.
6. Exod 19:16: Heb. קלת, CP = 14 βρονταί. [67] LXX φωναί.
7. Exod 28:14: Heb. שרשרת, CP ἁλυσίδια, 14 ἁλυσειδ. LXX κροσσωτά, Ak., Sym. ἁλύσεις, Th., χαλαστά.
8. Exod 28:17: Heb. ומלאת, CP = 14 ἀναγεμίσεις. LXX καθυφανεῖς, Ak., Sym., Th. πληρώσεις.
9. Exod 30:13: Heb. שקל, CP = 14 ἐξάγιου.[68] LXX δίδραχμου, Ak., Sym. στατῆρος.

These are only a few examples from many more that might have been chosen. They suffice to enable us to make some general observations:

1. CP and 14 share readings that are not obvious translations, e.g. because of some exegetical point (1, 3, 6).
2. Sometimes they resemble ancient renderings, notably those of Akylas, but more usually they differ from these, where we know them (3, 4, 5, 8, 9).
3. Some belong to the higher or older levels of the language (1, 3), some to the colloquial or later levels (2, 4).
4. Some renderings can be paralleled from other medieval sources.

There are, of course, many glosses in 14 which have no close equivalent in CP, but the large number of matches confirms the view that CP is in some sense a traditional translation, whatever process led to it being printed in the 1547 polyglot.

The comparison between CP and the Fitzwilliam Prophets manuscript (MANUSCRIPT 13) is less straightforward, because they relate to different

[65] This medieval word for an army is also found in both sources for חיל at Exod 14:4 and for מחנה at Exod 14:20, 14:24 and 32:17.

[66] This equivalence is also found in MANUSCRIPT 9 at Hab 2:18.

[67] This equivalence is also found in MANUSCRIPT 9 at Ezek 10:5.

[68] The same word, ἐξάγιον, is used in both CP and F^b for שקל at Ex 30:24 and 38:24 (LXX 39:1), where LXX uses σίκλος.

biblical books. We can, however, study the ways that both translate the same Hebrew words, and the result is sometimes striking. For example:

– Heb. רמה, 'deceive': CP Gen 29:25 μ' ἐκόμπωσες, 13 Josh 9:22 ἐκομπώσετιν. Neither Akylas nor any other ancient translator is recorded as using this verb.
– Heb. הקיף, 'surround': CP Lev 19:27, τριγυρήσετε, 13 Josh 6:11, τριγύρισε. This is a late word. At Lev 19:27 we have the renderings of LXX and the Three, and they are all different. (LXX ποιήσετε σισόην, Ak. περικυκλώσεις, Sym. περιξυρήσετε κύκλῳ, Th. κυκλώσετε).
– Heb. השלים. The meaning of the Hebrew is unclear. CP and 13 both understand it as being related to שלום, 'peace'. CP Deut 20:12, ἐρηνιώση (LXX ὑπακούσωσιν, 'submit'), 13 Josh 10:4 ἐρήνευσεν (LXX αὐτομόλησαν, 'deserted').

Such examples demonstrate that there is a connection between the medieval glosses of the Fitzwilliam manuscript and the 1547 Pentateuch.

Concluding remarks

We know far more about Greek-speaking Judaism and its written culture during this period than in earlier times, yet it is still difficult to find concrete traces of the Greek Bible translations in the written remains of the period, beyond some glosses in biblical commentaries couched in Hebrew, and the chance survival of two copies of the Greek Jonah in Hebrew prayer books. Great importance therefore attaches to the St Petersburg glossary, the most substantial instance of this type of text. It testifies to the continuing reliance of Jews studying the Hebrew Bible on Greek translations. As in the case of other glossaries, we can see that the glosses are not *ad hoc* translations, but derive from an established practice of translation, giving rise to a number of alternative translations of the same Hebrew lemma, translations which can often be seen to be related to ancient translations or other medieval glosses.

It is tempting to infer that various continuous translations were available to the glossator (or rather glossators, since different hands can be distinguished in the manuscript). The possibility that such translations existed seems to be confirmed by the example of Jonah and the 1547 Pentateuch, but both these cases are problematic. Jonah seems to be a unique usage, confined to a single occasion in the liturgical year, and to a single Jewish community. The 1547 Pentateuch may well preserve a much older text: there is a good deal of evidence to support this view. On the other hand a persistent scholarly view maintains that it was compiled for the 16th-century publication, even if this was done on the basis of a strong unwritten medieval tradition.

From the few examples given, out of many more that might have been cited, it is possible to see how strongly the ancient versions continued to be present so many centuries after they were made. Pride of place without any doubt goes to the translation of Akylas, despite – or perhaps because of – the very distinctive flavour of its Greek. But we can also perceive the influence of the Septuagint, indeed we have seen that in the 1547 Pentateuch the earliest translation was still very much alive, even if combined with other elements and modified in various ways.

The 1547 Pentateuch enables us to see that the tradition of Greek Jewish Bible translations with which this investigation is concerned continued right up to, and in fact well beyond, the Ottoman conquest.

Part 3

Conclusions

Chapter 8

Conclusions

General and particular

I have chosen to present this investigation following a chronological schema, and to present each manuscript against its historical background. There are advantages to this approach: it makes it possible to trace a certain development, while examining each witness separately. I have focused on the distinctive features of each text, and tried to show that each one has its own personality, so to speak, and that no two are alike. Even the two copies of the translation of Jonah are significantly different from each other.

In this concluding section of my argument I shall adopt a different approach. I shall survey the material as a whole, and focus on shared features and general trends. The emphasis will be on the general rather than the particular.

Looking at the evidence as a whole enables us to see more clearly what a widespread phenomenon the use of Greek translations was in Byzantine Judaism. It also confirms that we are in the presence of a real tradition of translation in which translations of individual passages or whole books are passed on from generation to generation, often in the same words, many of which can be traced back to the Graeco-Roman period.

Yet, for all the persistence and coherence of this tradition, it is essentially an oral enterprise, and is only rarely committed to writing. In this respect it stands in stark contrast to the Christian tradition, which is essentially a written one.

It stands in contrast to the Christian tradition in other ways, too. The Greek translation used in the Church enjoyed an autonomy and a primacy not only as a written text, an artifact, but also in a more abstract way, whether as a source of authoritative teachings or as an element in the worship of the religious community. In the synagogue the translation was always secondary, and its standing derived from that of the Hebrew text, which was primary, both as a source of authoritative teachings and within the worship.

There is an analogous contrast in terms of language, too. Both Jews and Christians were accustomed to a biblical Greek language that was not that of their everyday speech. No one spoke biblical Greek. It was a hieratic lan-

guage.[1] Christian biblical Greek, however, was perceived as having a thoroughgoing and organic connection both with spoken Greek and with classical Greek. Jewish biblical Greek had a more tenuous connection with both. It was certainly open to receiving vernacular elements (unlike its Christian counterpart), and some of its vocabulary was directly connected with ancient Greek. However, it had a distinctly foreign or exotic ethos, because of its self-conscious dependence on Hebrew. There are traces of this in the Church's translation too, and indeed to some extent the difference is one of degree, but the general effect is totally different. Jewish biblical Greek is inherently foreign-sounding, and its foreignness is heightened by its being written in Hebrew letters. The foreignness of the Greek translations is the reflection of the deliberately foreign ethos of Byzantine Judaism, which arises from a rejection of Hellenism and an embracing of Hebraism.

Greek Bible translations across time and space

It is, I trust, abundantly clear from the foregoing pages that throughout the Middle Ages Greek-speaking Jews were familiar with Greek translations of the holy Scriptures. This phenomenon is not limited to a specific time or place, or to a particular group or sect. It is common to Rabbanites and Karaites, despite the many things that divided them. Even though the use of translations is not discussed and is very rarely even mentioned in the contemporary literature, it was a perfectly normal, and in some ways a defining, feature of Byzantine Judaism.

It also seems clear that Byzantine Judaism (unlike Byzantine Christianity) did not have a single, authoritative Greek translation. On the contrary, from the way the glossaries present two or more renderings of a single Hebrew word or phrase we can infer that there were various translations, or traditions of glossing, none of which necessarily enjoyed a higher status or authority than the others.

A coherent tradition

Although we have so few remnants of the translations, we can see that, broadly speaking, a single approach to the translator's task unites them all. Their aim is to represent as faithfully as possible in Greek what is in the Hebrew – not just the sense of the words but their grammar, their order, and

[1] This was not just a medieval phenomenon, but existed in ancient times too: see Léonas, *Recherches*.

minute details such as the presence or absence of the article, or even features of Hebrew often thought untranslatable, such as the particle that indicates the direct object of the verb. We have even observed a tendency to choose Greek words that echo the sound of the Hebrew.

The result is a very distinctive kind of Greek, far removed from all other kinds of spoken or written Greek. It would be easy to dismiss it as merely 'translationese', the awkward product of someone unskilled in translation, except that it is too consistent to be attributable to chance or individual inadequacy: there is clearly a theory of translation behind it, one which is attentive to the formal elements as much as (or more than) the sense of the original, and is more respectful of the habits of the source language than of those of the target language.

The Greek language of the translations is thus a unique type of Greek, combining in effect Greek vocabulary with Hebrew grammar.[2] It is analogous to the Spanish used by Spanish-speaking Jews in their biblical translations, for which Haïm Vidal Séphiha has coined the French term 'judéo-espagnol calque'.[3] Séphiha also uses the term 'judéo-grec calque'.[4] It is a highly self-conscious and sophisticated creation, that is not really comprehensible to someone who has not been brought up with it or trained to use it. In other words it is a kind of code. It is clearly of great utility for those learning Hebrew or studying the Hebrew biblical text, but if that were its only function we should probably not find it used in translations intended for liturgical use.

The translations constitute a genuine tradition, not only by virtue of maintaining a style of translation and a calque language, but also in respecting a certain consistency in translating specific words.

Finally, they also share a common approach to the interpretation of the text, which is likewise aimed at conveying the plain meaning of the Hebrew, avoiding allegory, even though many standard allegorical equivalents of biblical expressions can be found throughout the rabbinic literature. This is a feature that can be traced back to ancient models, such as the original translation of the Song of Songs, which sets out the plain meaning of the text, leaving it to the expositor or the reader to elaborate the well-established allegorical meaning.[5]

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[2] See Krivoruchko, 'Medieval and early modern Judaeo-Greek biblical translations'.
[3] Séphiha, *Le Ladino*.
[4] *Idem*, 'Langues juives', 62.
[5] De Lange, 'From eros to pneuma'.

The persistence of ancient translations

One of the most important features to emerge from our study of the medieval tradition is the strong influence of the ancient Jewish translations into Greek. This continuity from ancient to modern times is a unique feature of Greek-speaking Judaism, unrivalled in the Jewish world for its length, strength and complexity. We observed, particularly from the surviving manuscripts, the multiplicity of different translations circulating side by side in antiquity, both variant texts of the Old Greek or LXX and various more or less radical revisions of it. A similar multiplicity characterises the medieval translations, with no one translation, as we remarked above, enjoying a higher status or authority than the others.

The study of the influence of the ancient translations is beset with methodological difficulties. How much simpler our task would be if we had complete texts of the other translations, as we do for the Septuagint. As it is, we have to rely on fragments, which can be frustrating and risks confusing the picture. In the case of Akylas his style of translation is so distinctive that we can often recognise it even in places where we have no fragment, but even then there is no certainty: one has only to think of the disagreements about whether 'LXX' Ecclesiastes is by Akylas. The other translations are not distinctive enough for us to recognise their influence in the absence of direct evidence.

Moreover, we know from the Hexaplaric fragments that 'the Three' often share a rendering. Sometimes they share it with LXX; at others they have a common reading not shared with LXX, perhaps because they are following some other translation, now lost. Consequently we are liable to be misled by an apparent similarity with an attested reading, e.g. of Akylas: unless we have fuller documentation for the word in question, we must be aware that we are on thin ice in identifying the influence of a particular ancient translation.

Finally, in comparing or contrasting readings, we must be sensitive to how common or unusual a word is, or how obvious or obscure it is from an exegetical point of view.

To speak of multiplicity is not to suggest that there was no search for authenticity or authority in the translations. I argued in Chapter 4 that by the mid-6th century the Jewish communities were violently torn apart by a conflict between adherents of the Septuagint and those of Akylas, reflecting a conflict between the 'Hellenists' and the rabbinic faction. The conflict in which the emperor Justinian attempted to mediate centred on questions of divine authority and of accuracy in translation, as well as of innovation versus tradition. The primary authority of the Hebrew over the Greek translations was accepted at least by the emperor. We do not know how it was viewed by those Jewish communities that knew no Hebrew. The gradual Hebraisation of these communities in the course of the ensuing centuries, in

which the rabbinic movement certainly played an important part, led to a clear assertion of the primacy of the Hebrew, and specifically what became the Masoretic Text, throughout the Jewish communities of the empire. The diversity of translations to a large extent reflects disagreements about the interpretation and precise translation of the Hebrew: that is why we find influences from different ancient translations in the same texts, even within a single biblical verse.

By far the strongest and clearest influence that we have observed throughout the investigation has been that of Akylas. This translation is strongly identified with Rabbinic Judaism, and is named in the rabbinic literature. It is faithful to the proto-MT and is self-consciously subordinate to it.

The influence of Symmachos is far less obvious, and harder to identify explicitly. Symmachos, too, has rabbinic connections, and is named by the Rabbis. It, too, is based on the proto-MT; its approach is different from that of Akylas and in some ways complementary to it.

These two translations are generally agreed, on the basis of patristic testimony, to have been produced in the second century. This may indeed be so, but behind them stands a long tradition, reaching back beyond the beginnings of Rabbinic Judaism.

The same is true of the translation ascribed to Theodotion, which is often linked to the other two thanks to their incorporation in Origen's *Hexapla*, and to a Christian tendency to refer to them collectively as 'the Three'. (We do not know if this was a Jewish usage.) Specialists speak of 'proto-Theodotion', and discuss the relationship between Theodotion and the earlier *kaige* tradition.

Origen included some other, partial, translations in his great compilation, a reminder of the great diversity prevailing in the 3rd century. The *Hexapla* contained a finite number of translations, even if the number varied from book to book; but the Jews were not aware of the *Hexapla*, nor were they influenced by it. We must to keep an open mind about the possible enduring influence of other ancient translations, of which Origen knew little or nothing. It is hardly possible to believe that he brought together all the texts that existed in his day, and therefore we need to consider the hypothetical question of the survival of traces of other translations in the medieval period.

Bearing all these considerations in mind, let us summarise what we have learned about the ancient roots of the medieval translations.

1. Akylas

The survival of Akylas, while it is an interesting discovery, first made by David Blondheim, is in retrospect not entirely surprising. What is remarkable

perhaps is the extent to which it pervades the whole corpus of materials we have been scrutinising.

In the earliest period we observed its influence in the few biblical inscriptions that survive. We also considered in Chapter 4 two handsome, careful copies of this translation found among the Cairo Genizah palimpsests (MANUSCRIPT 1, 2). I argued that, on balance, these are more likely to have been made for Jewish than for Christian use, and were probably prepared for public reading in a synagogue. A comparison with the remaining fragments of the *Hexapla* revealed the great respect for fidelity with which the text had been transmitted over a space of some three centuries. This contrasts sharply with what we saw in later periods.

The palimpsest glossary presented in Chapter 5 (MANUSCRIPT 3) is generally consistent with Akylas, but reveals the first signs of revision of the language towards the vernacular. Apparently at this stage Akylas no longer enjoyed the high status (is it an exaggeration to speak of its 'sacred' status?) that had previously protected it from such revision.

The manuscript evidence from the Genizah and elsewhere considered in Chapter 6 revealed the very strong influence of Akylas throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This influence, however, was not uniform. Some witnesses displayed more thoroughgoing influence than other, and not all opted for the same features. Only the translation of Kohelet/Ecclesiastes (MANUSCRIPT 4), for instance, preserved the use of σύν to represent **את**, perhaps the most distinctive feature of Akylas. It is interesting that this usage is not represented in the other texts, but since these consist mainly of one-word glosses it is possible, although not entirely likely, that its absence is accidental. The distinctive vocabulary of Akylas was a feature of the glosses on Malachi and Job (MANUSCRIPT 5) (with words such as γεννηματισμός and σπίλωμα), and we also observed strong influence from Akylas on the glosses on 1 Kings (MANUSCRIPT 6) and the Fitzwilliam Museum codex (MANUSCRIPT 13). Even a text where the influence of this translation was less dominant, such as the commentary on Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets (MANUSCRIPT 9), shows an awareness of it. For example at Joel 1:14 it glosses **אספו** as συλλέξατε, where LXX has συναγάγετε: it is a peculiarity of Akylas that he regularly replaces συνάγειν by συλλέγειν to translate the verb **אסף**.

At a much later period we noticed in Chapter 7 the presence of renderings of Akylas in the Constantinople Pentateuch.

2. Septuagint

I argued in Chapter 4 that this was the preferred translation of the 'Hellenist' faction in the sixth century. It was the dominant text in the manuscript remains we considered in that chapter, and in funerary inscriptions the

citations of Prov 10:7 showed its influence, together with a tendency to revise it towards the proto-MT and Akylas. (The same tendency was noticed in a Samaritan inscription from Thessalonike.) It is interesting to enquire whether in the course of the unsuccessful *Kulturkampf* with the rabbinic movement, which favoured Akylas, the Septuagint was decisively abandoned, or whether it was sufficiently deeply engrained in the collective memory for some recollection of it to survive.

Although its influence appeared to be far less pervasive than that of Akylas, we observed readings from LXX, which could not be readily explained away, at several points in the tradition. One was in the story of David and Goliath in MANUSCRIPT 13, where the rare word ἀλυσιδωτός was used of the giant's breastplate at 1 Sam 17:5, exactly as in LXX. Another example was in the name of the plant that sheltered the prophet Jonah from the sun at Jonah 4:6, where the Septuagint translator opted for κολοκύνθη, a gourd or perhaps something like a courgette, and the Cretan translation of Jonah (MANUSCRIPT 17, 18) renders it by κολοκυθέα, a word that is directly descended from the LXX translation and means the same. Not only is this reading quite different from that of 'the Three', but it is exegetically distinctive.

Another example comes from the 14th-century glossary to the Prophets (MANUSCRIPT 19) discussed in Chapter 7. At Jer 1:6 this glossary follows the LXX rendering of *Adonai Elohim*, ὦ δέσποτα κύριε. This rendering of a divine name is very remarkable in 14th-century Judaism, and it is hard to doubt that its ultimate source is the LXX. In the same chapter we observed how close the Constantinople Pentateuch was in many ways to the Septuagint.

Taking these examples – and they are only examples – together, I would maintain that individually they are all quite strong, and that together they conclusively indicate the enduring influence of the Septuagint. The traditional scenario that has the Jews collectively abandoning the Septuagint translation soon after the advent of Christianity is completely untenable in the face of such evidence that that translation continued to have some influence among Jews throughout the Middle Ages and into the age of print. I am not claiming that copies of the Septuagint circulated among Jews in the Middle Ages, any more than copies of Akylas or Symmachos did. It is true that statistically that influence is not very strong compared to Akylas and other translations, but the Septuagint certainly raises its distinctive voice from time to time. The Jewish translators and glossators drew on a range of sometimes half-remembered translations, and among these the Septuagint definitely has its place.

3. Symmachos

The presence of Symmachos in the medieval tradition is less marked, partly perhaps because this translation often shares renderings with Akylas and LXX.

Among the early manuscripts listed in Chapter 4 we noted one, P. Wien Rainer 18, that shows every sign of being Jewish, and has a text of the Psalms that is thought to be that of Symmachos, and another, P. Berlin 17035, dated ca 500, that seems to contain part of Symmachos's translation of Genesis.

MANUSCRIPT 3 has an interesting rendering of the description of the manna in Exod 16:14, מחספס, ἀνεσυρμένον. A very similar gloss is found in MANUSCRIPT 14, ἀνασυρόμενον. This has been ascribed to Symmachos on the basis of the Syrohexapla, which gives a different rendering for Akylas, shared with Theodotion. It seems at least likely, therefore, that this gloss derives from Symmachos rather than Akylas.

Among the other Genizah fragments, MANUSCRIPT 6, otherwise heavily influenced by Akylas, has a gloss at 1 Kings 7:9 that may well reveal the influence of Symmachos. At 1 Kings 7:36, the obscure word כמער is glossed twice, and the second gloss is ὡς ἀσκημοσύνην, with an additional comment comparing Hab 2:15, where Symmachos has the same rendering for MT על־מעוריהם. The renderings of LXX and Akylas are different. In fact this rendering can be traced back to the Minor Prophets scroll from Nahal Hever, where at the end of Hab 2:15 the editors restore [ἐπὶ τὴν ἀσχημοσ]ύνην αὐ[τῶν] (col. 18.21). It really does seem as though the rendering of מער by ἀσχημοσύνη, retained by Symmachos from an early revision, was still known in the 11th–12th century.

The commentary on Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets, at Ezek 21:29, although part of the text is missing, seems to cite the rendering of Symmachos, which differs from LXX and almost certainly from Akylas.

None of these identifications is entirely secure, but all of them have some probability of coming from Symmachos, and cumulatively their evidence suggests that this ancient translation continued to exert an influence.

4. Kaige-Theodotion

The remnants of this ancient tradition are as difficult to identify as those of Symmachos, for some of the same reasons. Thus the rendering from Hab 2:15 just mentioned, which can be traced back to the Minor Prophets scroll from Nahal Hever, which was the starting-point for Dominique Barthélemy's exposition of this tradition, could as well be ascribed to it as to Symmachos.

In the Christian Church Theodotion's translation of Daniel replaced that of the Septuagint in most manuscripts. This is also the text we find in what seems to be a Jewish manuscript, P. Lit. Lond. 211.

Among the medieval glosses that seem most securely attributable to Theodotion is the translation of the word מסרת at Ezek 20:37 by παράδοσις, 'tradition' in MANUSCRIPT 9. Both Akylas and Symmachos opt for the meaning 'bond'; only Theodotion and our gloss explain מסרת as 'tradition'.

Even more striking is the gloss to Gen 3:8, לרוח היום, found in the commentator Jacob ben Reuben. He explains it as τὸ κατάψυχον, the cool part of the day. This seems to echo Theodotion's πρὸς κατάψυξιν. As we saw, this is not so much a translation of the Hebrew as an explanatory insertion, which makes it all the more interesting that the medieval Byzantine commentator should have picked it up.

5. 'Non-hexaplaric' readings

How can we identify survivals from other translations, in the absence of the hexaplaric evidence, incomplete though it is? We may be alerted by the use of archaic-looking Greek words or forms, but with no confirmation it is hard to say they come from lost ancient versions.

Among possible contenders is the gloss μαλακτόν, 'malleable', on Job 28:15 in MANUSCRIPT 5. Unlike many of the other glosses in this glossary it does not come from Akylas, and it is not attested in any of the ancient translations. It may be a medieval gloss, but it is just as likely to come from a lost translation.

The translation of אלם by βωβός in several of the sources (MANUSCRIPT 9, MANUSCRIPT 14 and MANUSCRIPT 19) is remarkable for its consistency in the tradition over a long period. This word is attested in some ancient Greek sources, but it is rare. It may well originate in an ancient translation.

The word שקל is glossed, both in MANUSCRIPT 14 and in the Constantinople Pentateuch, by ἐξάγιον. Again, this is a rare word in ancient Greek, and in my view it is quite likely to come from a lost translation.

There is one example where we do have a scrap of ancient evidence. In the scholia on Genesis and Exodus, in a series of scholia on Genesis 49:10–11 which are full of Greek glosses, the plant-name שרקה is glossed as καλλίκαρπος,[6] and this is precisely the translation of the related word שרק that Jerome mentions in his commentary on Isa 5:2, in the Parable of the Vineyard. He says that 'certain people' translate it in this way, but he does not specify who: presumably Jewish translators. It appears beyond doubt, then, that the medieval translations do preserve some elements from ancient translations that were not codified in the *Hexapla*.

[6] The same rendering (with a single lambda) is found in F^{b}, according to Field.

The medieval Greek component

A key difference between the Jewish and the Christian translations in our period is that whereas the Christian scribes take pains to copy the – to them – archaic and artificial Greek of the Septuagint and not to permit their own language to creep into the text, the Jewish translations freely admit the later and more colloquial strata of the language.

Very often it is essentially a matter of spelling, such as ἰσπάνιν for σπάνιν (MANUSCRIPT 5), or the intrusive -γ- in πορευγόμενος (MANUSCRIPT 4). Words are often written in the way that had become usual in less formal Byzantine Greek, for example with the ending -ιν instead of -ιον.

We have also observed, however, countless examples of words that had not entered the Greek language at the time the ancient translations were made, words such as λησμονεῖν and γυρίζειν (MANUSCRIPT 4) or σαπούνιν (MANUSCRIPT 5).

These phenomenena are interesting enough in themselves, in a context where little or no flexibility was tolerated in writing biblical texts in Hebrew, by Jewish scribes, or in Greek, by Christian ones. Even more interesting is the tendency for these new renderings to become consistent. In other words they are not simply *ad hoc* colloquial translations by a teacher or a pupil, but become codified or even in a sense fossilized. This process is not limited to one or two texts but is found across the range of texts we have looked at. Here are some examples:

Gen 49:10 יקהת μουδιασμός MANUSCRIPT 7, τὸ μουδιᾶσαι Jacob ben Reuben.

Gen 49:27 עד πραῖδα MANUSCRIPT 7, MANUSCRIPT 14.

Josh 10:4 וזנבתם καὶ οὐραδοκοπήσετεν αὐτούς MANUSCRIPT 13, MANUSCRIPT 14.

1 Sam 17:5 ושריון καὶ λιρίκι(ν) MANUSCRIPT 13, MANUSCRIPT 19.

1 Kings 7:29 ליות πετόνια MANUSCRIPT 6, MANUSCRIPT 10, MANUSCRIPT 19.

1 Kings 7:46 מעבה πάχωμα MANUSCRIPT 6, MANUSCRIPT 19.

1 Kings 7:50 מזמרות θυμιατοί MANUSCRIPT 6, MANUSCRIPT 10.

2 Kings 8:15 המכבר τὸ σπουγγάριν, τὸ προσκεφαλίδιν MANUSCRIPT 13, MANUSCRIPT 19.

Ezek 13:20 כסתותיכנה σακκούλια MANUSCRIPT 9, Jacob ben Reuben.

Such consistency exemplifies what we mean by the phrase ‘tradition of glossing’. Clearly, students learnt not just the meaning of the Hebrew words but their standard, codified Greek equivalent, whether this derived from the ancient translations or had more recent origins.

How were translations used?

From the relatively sparse traces these translations have left behind we can attempt to draw some inferences about how they were used in Jewish communities that remained Greek-speaking. There are two distinct although inter-related uses: in the synagogue and in the classroom.

Only one of the witnesses we have considered bears unambiguous signs of use in the synagogue, namely the translation of the Book of Jonah. This is preserved in two copies; in both cases the translation is embedded within a Hebrew prayer book for the afternoon service of the Day of Atonement. There is thus no doubt that its setting is the synagogue, and more specifically in Venetian-ruled Crete. An external source of the 16th century confirms that this text was read aloud in the synagogue, and even tells us how it was done: the first three verses of Jonah were read in Hebrew; then the entire book was read in Greek; finally three verses of Micah that conclude the traditional reading were read first in Hebrew and then in Greek. The two manuscripts, that are appreciably older than this description, present the reading differently. One (MANUSCRIPT 17, the older of the two) agrees closely with the description, but lacks the Greek translation of the verses from Micah. The other (MANUSCRIPT 18) gives each verse of the Hebrew followed by its translation. The two manuscripts thus represent two different ways of using the Greek translation. In one (represented by MANUSCRIPT 17 and the external source) it effectively replaces the Hebrew reading, which is reduced to a symbolic minimum. In the other (represented by MANUSCRIPT 18) the Hebrew retains its dominant role, and the Greek is added as a kind of *targum*. Incidentally, although the language of the translation displays some vernacular features, it is not a vernacular translation, but is in the 'calque language' typical of these translations. It is therefore doubtful to what extent it would be intelligible orally to someone not already familiar with the text, whether it was read together with the Hebrew or instead of it.

It is by no means impossible that both these styles of reading were practised at different times and places, and for other parts of the Bible. If so, we have no firm evidence of it. Both the other continuous translations we have considered, the fragment of Kohelet from the Genizah and the Pentateuch included in the 1547 Polyglot, have the first word or phrase of each verse in Hebrew preceding the verse in Greek. This may suggest that such texts were used to help congregants follow a public reading in Hebrew. It is equally possible, however, that they were intended for the classroom, to help students follow a teacher's exposition of the Hebrew.

The other Jewish texts we have examined, glossaries, scholia and annotated Hebrew texts, are clearly intended for the study of the Hebrew, and this category can be extended to include Greek glosses embedded within Hebrew commentaries. It is worthy of note that all the glossaries follow the

order of the biblical text and not alphabetical or any other order. They are thus aids to study of specific texts, and not general reference works. All these texts are consequently intended for use in a classroom setting (as teachers' or pupils' notes) or for private study.

Greek glosses embedded within Hebrew commentaries naturally follow the same pattern, and are closely related to the tradition of glossaries and annotations.

How were translations transmitted?

The character of the translations, with their calque language and their tendency to perpetuate standard renderings of Hebrew words, raises the practical question of how they were transmitted. If they were transmitted in the form of continuous written texts we should surely expect to have found more examples in the Genizah or elsewhere, since these would have been among the commonest of Byzantine Jewish texts, comparable to Hebrew biblical manuscripts or prayer books. It is likelier, therefore, that they were transmitted orally. How was this achieved? Any answer to this question must be speculative, but the key point is that their function was to help students, at whatever level, to learn, understand and expound the Hebrew text. The style of the translations was perfectly adapted to suit this end. We may imagine that schoolchildren beginning their study of Hebrew would learn a verse of the Hebrew, followed by its translation. A class may have recited both by rote. Such an approach would have been particularly well suited to the form of synagogue reading represented by MANUSCRIPT 18, in which Hebrew and Greek are recited alternately. It is possible that the reader in the synagogue normally read the Hebrew from a written text and recited the Greek from memory, or improvised a translation on the basis of years of study using calque translations.[7]

Hebrew and Greek in Byzantine Judaism

It should be clear by now what the relationship between the Hebrew and Greek languages was in Byzantine Judaism, at least from the time of the triumph of Rabbinism, at some point during the Dark Ages.

We saw in Chapter 1, during our study of Justinian's Novel 146, that in the sixth century the Jewish communities of Byzantium were caught up in a bitter

[7] See further Sznol, 'Text and glossary'. Julia Krivoruchko has argued for oral transmission on the basis of linguistic study: 'Η ποιητική'. See also Alexander, 'The Targumim'. For an analogous study of Ladino translation see Bunis, 'Translating'.

conflict that centred to a large extent on language and tradition. The traditraditional language of the synagogue, that is the language of the liturgy and the scriptural readings, was Greek, and there was strong hostility among traditionalists to the introduction of Hebrew. With hindsight we can see that this was a lost cause. To some extent this was the result of the state's policy of excluding Jews, along with others who were not Orthodox Christians, from schools that taught Greek grammar and from careers that required a good knowledge of Greek. Equally strong as a factor, however, was the missionary thrust of Rabbinic Judaism from Palestine, a movement that insisted on Hebrew as the language of the synagogue and the backbone of Jewish education.

Analogies with some of the eastern Christian communities suggest that there were some advantages for the Jewish minority in having their own liturgical and scholarly language, in terms of defining their identity. The Karaite Judah Hadassi, castigating the Rabbanites for introducing Greek expressions into their documents, says that they 'behave like gentiles'. He adds another, ideological, reason for the use of Hebrew: 'our language is the language spoken by our God at Mount Sinai'.[8]

It is not accurate to think of the Byzantine Jews as being bilingual, in the generally accepted sense of the term. Leaving aside immigrants, Greek was their mother tongue and their everyday language, but they were not educated to read and write it. Their education, which was conducted in Greek, was aimed at giving them a mastery of Hebrew, and at the higher level also of Aramaic. All their books were written in Hebrew, and we have seen that they used the Hebrew alphabet to write Greek. Hebrew was a sacred language, a learned language, and also served as a means of written communication not only with foreign Jews but among themselves. Greek was their normal language of spoken communication, both with Jews and with Christians. In addition, they used a special form of Greek, the calque language discussed earlier, for the specific purpose of studying and translating the Bible.

Hellenism and Rabbinism

Justinian's Novel 146 affords a rare glimpse into the realities of the struggle between Hellenism and Rabbinic Judaism, and as we saw it was a struggle that ultimately the Hellenists lost. Their defeat was, however, not total. Quite a number of distinctive customs survived in Byzantium, some of which were explicitly singled out for criticism by rabbinic authorities. For example, Rabbi Isaiah of Trani (ca 1180 to ca 1250) was critical of a number of

[8] *Eshkol ha-Kopher* (Yevpatoria, 1836), fol. 13a. See de Lange, 'Hebrews, Greeks or Romans?', 113.

practices relating to marriage, some of which may well represent survivals of ancient customs.[9] He specifically mentions the 'great rejoicings', called *stefanomata* ('crownings'), celebrated at the time of the betrothal, after which the couple were considered to be married, contrary to the rabbinic procedure which postponed the actual marriage for a while. He also commented on what he saw as the laxity of the Byzantines in the matter of ritual baths, which, again, may reflect the survival of ancient Roman bathing practices.[10] Contrary to general rabbinic usage, a married Jewish woman in Byzantium retained her dowry, and after her death, if there were no children of the marriage, it returned to her father's family, as was the case in Roman and Byzantine law.[11] There are several other instances of such deviation from rabbinic practice, which are peculiar to Byzantine Judaism and in all likelihood represent successful local resistance to the introduction of rabbinic norms.[12]

An enduring attachment to ancient Hellenistic Jewish literature can be sensed in surviving Byzantine Jewish writings, but is hard to pin down. As we have mentioned earlier, the author of the *Yosippon*, a work which in its entirety pays tribute to Josephus, made use of 'apocryphal' books such as 1 and 2 Maccabees and the Greek Esther.[13] Josephus, Philo and other ancient Greek Jewish authors are not cited directly in the medieval writings, but they have left abundant traces in them. It is striking, for example, that a commentary on Zechariah from the Genizah (in MANUSCRIPT 9) interprets the biblical prophecies as referring to Antiochus and Herod.[14]

Several manuscripts of the Byzantine Jewish prayer book give the text of the announcement of the coming New Moon not only in the usual Aramaic but in Greek as well.[15] The language of the announcement has some archaic features, and the text refers rather surprisingly to the 'holy council that used to sit in Jerusalem' or 'in the land of Israel'. Even more surprising is the wording: 'God revealed it to Israel, and he revealed it to the Sages at the Pharos', which seems to be an allusion to the island in Alexandria where, according to Philo (*Life of Moses,* 2.35–44) the Pentateuch was first translated into Greek, and where a great festival was held annually to venerate 'the place where the light of the translation first flashed out'.

A distinctive element in Byzantine Jewish biblical exegesis is the conviction that the biblical text had been edited at some point on the basis of

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[9] The best study of this topic is Assaf, 'On the family life'. Summary in Bowman, *The Jews of Byzantium*, 122–3.

[10] *Ibid*., 124–5, esp. n. 70; 213–14, esp. n. 7.

[11] *Ibid*., 125–6.

[12] *Ibid*., 126–7.

[13] Dönitz, '*Sefer Yosippon*'.

[14] *GJT,* 286–92.

[15] Niehoff-Panagiotidis and Hollender, 'Εχομε ראש חדש'; de Lange, 'Hebrew/Greek manuscripts', 265.

different manuscripts. The editor is named as Ezra, or simply referred to as 'the editor'.[16] It is probable that this approach to the textual history of the Bible has ancient roots, and it seems to be influenced by the edition of Homer in Hellenistic Alexandria.

In the specific area of Greek Bible translations the most significant indication of a concession to the Hellenist faction is the continuing influence of the Septuagint. While it is not regularly cited in the glosses, we have found traces of it even as late as the 1547 Pentateuch. As we saw in the discussion of Justinian's Novel, the Hellenists were particularly strongly attached to this translation. As in the case of Philo and Josephus, it is not cited explicitly, but its memory remains alive.

The reading of the Book of Jonah in Greek during the Day of Atonement service in Crete is described in the sixteenth century as a long-established custom. We do not know how old it was, but it is by no means impossible that it goes back ultimately to the ancient Greek-speaking synagogue, not in its present textual form, but as practice.

Karaites and Rabbanites

Despite the many differences between Rabbanites and Karaites, and the well-documented antagonism between them, they both shared a common Hebrew-based culture. They prayed in Hebrew in their synagogues and they learnt to read and write Hebrew at school. Above all, they studied the Bible in Hebrew. This was all the more important to the Karaites, because the Bible was their only revealed and authoritative book. It is likely that biblical study was given a boost among Rabbanites by the contact with Karaism, and by such religious polemic as we see in the writings of the Rabbanite Tobias ben Eliezer or the Karaite Judah Hadassi. At the same time, the Greek translations belong to the shared heritage of both communities. We have observed that one of our witnesses (MANUSCRIPT 10) clearly has a Karaite origin, while in the majority of cases it is impossible to determine whether the authors of the glosses were Karaite or Rabbanite.[17]

To those used to thinking of the Karaites as newcomers in Byzantium their attachment to the Greek Bible translations may seem surprising. Greek glosses are found in Karaite works composed in Hebrew within a generation or two of the first appearance of Karaite communities in Byzantium.[18] This time-span is too short to be accounted for by cultural assimilation among a self-contained body of Arabic-speaking immigrants. The only plausible

[16] Steiner, 'A Jewish theory of biblical redaction'.
[17] *Idem*, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries'.
[18] See Ankori, *Karaites in Byzantium*, 193–203.

explanation is that the new movement attracted a substantial number of ad-adherents from within the older Byzantine Jewish community, including the authors of these commentaries, such as Tobias ben Moses (born Constantinople, ca 1000)[19] or the anonymous sources used by Jacob ben Reuben in his *Sefer ha-'Osher*.[20]

The extraordinary success of Karaism in Byzantium, which contrasts dramatically with their failure to establish a foothold in most other parts of Europe, has never been adequately explained. We noticed a hint in Justinian's Novel 146, preserving (I suggested) the wording of the plea of the Hellenist faction, where the δευτέρωσις, identifiable as the rabbinic teaching, is condemned 'as it is neither contained in the holy Books nor handed down by tradition from the Prophets, but is an invention of men speaking from the earth alone and having nothing divine in them'. This formulation is so similar to the central argument deployed later by the Karaites against the Rabbanites that it is hard to avoid a suspicion that it was surviving prejudice against the Talmud among a section of the Hellenists that prepared fertile ground in Byzantium for the spread of Karaism.

Jews and Christians

In considering the religious and cultural history of Byzantine Judaism it is important not to lose sight of the Christian context which forms the backdrop against which this history is played out. Byzantine Christianity was deeply marked by its Jewish origins.[21] Its relations with Judaism, whether conceived as a theological construct, a historical entity, or a living religion, were complex in the extreme.[22]

The Jewish scriptures constituted common ground between Christians and Jews in two distinct spheres. On the one hand they played a prominent role in mutual polemic between the two faiths; on the other, apart from any polemical motive, there was an interest particularly on the Christian side in Jewish texts and interpretations.

Many Byzantine Christian works survive, from all periods, in which Jews and Christians are represented debating the truth of their respective faiths,

[19] *Ibid*., 51.

[20] According to Ankori, Jacob 'lived in the eleventh century or some fifty years later', but 'the Hebrew translations underlying the compilation and the Greek glosses appended thereto belong undoubtedly to the eleventh century', *ibid*., 196–7.

[21] De Lange, 'Byzantium and the Judaic tradition'.

[22] *Idem*, 'Jews and Christians'.

and the arguments centre to a large extent on passages from Scripture.[23] There is an old and so far unresolved disagreement among scholars about the extent to which these works represent or even reproduce real-life discussions, but it seems clear enough that such discussions actually took place. John Moschos describes in his *Spiritual Meadow* how the learned scholastic Kosmas whom he visited in Alexandria (in the late 6th century) devoted his time to 'reading or writing against the Jews': 'He often sent me to debate with certain Hebrews about the scriptures, he himself being unwilling to leave his home.'[24] Kosmas had a huge library, and his devotion to studying anti-Jewish arguments, to the point that he did not even permit himself the distraction of debating with Jews himself, is very striking, as is the clear focus of his arguments on finding new scriptural proofs of the truth of the superiority of Christianity over Judaism.

A Christian bent on converting Jews by scriptural arguments must surely have striven to familiarise himself with the texts used by the Jews. These will have been with hardly any exception Greek texts. Origen, in an earlier age, had written:

> We make an effort not to be ignorant of their texts [i.e. the Jews' texts, contrasted here with the Septuagint], so that in dialoguing with Jews we do not proffer to them [readings] which are not in their copies, and so that we may make use of those which are current among them, even if they are not found in our texts. For if we prepare ourselves in such a way for our discussions with them, they will not despise or, as is their wont, laugh at believers of Gentile origin, on account of our ignorance of their true readings.[25]

In this context, Origen refers to his great collation of the various Jewish and Christian texts, the *Hexapla*, which directly or indirectly went on to serve generations of Christian scholars in search of Jewish readings.

Christians, then, had a motive for familiarising themselves with current Jewish texts, which is of course not to say that they always took the trouble to inform themselves adequately, particularly if they were writing a conventional tract directed to a Christian readership. The question consequently arises whether we can learn anything about current Jewish texts from the *adversus Judaeos* literature. One of the foremost specialists in this genre, Patrick Andrist, has subjected the extant dialogues from the earlier period to careful scrutiny and determined that, despite daunting methodological problems, there are a few cases 'that can reasonably be considered to have a good chance of genuinely reflecting a Jewish biblical

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[23] Surveys: Williams, *Adversus Judaeos*; Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte*; Krauss, *The Jewish-Christian Controversy*.

[24] See the discussion in Déroche, 'La polémique anti-judaïque', 285–6.

[25] Origen, *Letter to Africanus*, 9.

text of the time, even possibly a Jewish Greek Bible'.[26] This cautious conclusion points to scope for further research.

It may be presumed that the Jewish participants in such debates felt the need to familiarise themselves with Christian Bibles, or at least with the proof-texts that were deployed, often perhaps on the basis of lists of *testimonia*. Unfortunately we have very few analogous Jewish texts. The most interesting one for our purpose is the *Book of Nestor the Priest*, a literary work with a very complex history.[27] There are numerous proof texts, mainly from the New Testament but some from the Old. In two manuscripts these are given in Greek (in Hebrew characters); one of these was copied in Canea in Crete in 1493, the other in an unknown location in 1578. The Old Testament quotations are not identical with any known Greek version; their closest affinities are with the Septuagint. It is striking that some readings agree with the Septuagint against the MT. For example in chapter 37 Psalm 2:6 is cited with the Septuagint text ὄρος τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ, 'his holy mountain', where the MT has הר קדשי, 'my holy mountain'. Again, in chapter 41 Deuteronomy 32:39 is given in a form that is almost identical with the Septuagint, and that differs in three significant details from the MT: the latter, by comparison, adds 'now', repeats 'I', and has 'with me' instead of 'except me'. It is hard to know what inferences to draw from this. Do the citations relate to some text current among Jews, or among Christians? Given that this is a Jewish text the agreements with the Septuagint demonstrate at least a knowledge of the latter among some Jews, and the fact that the Septuagint is not cited verbally, but with some modifications mainly tending towards the vernacular, may well indicate the existence of a translation closely resembling the Septuagint within the Jewish tradition.

Outside the polemical context there are ample indications, as we have seen, of an interest in Jewish biblical texts and interpretations on the part of Christian scholars. We have observed that three Christian manuscripts contain annotations that appear to relate directly to the current Jewish translations (MANUSCRIPTS 14–16). How these glosses entered Christian manuscripts remains a mystery, but they certainly indicate that some Christian scholars were aware of and interested in the Jewish tradition of translation. Conversion of Jews to Christianity may be part of the story; some level of co-operation between Christian and Jewish scholars may be another.[28]

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[26] Andrist, 'The Greek Bible used by the Jews', 261.

[27] Lasker and Stroumsa, *The Polemic of Nestor the Priest*. A fragment of an anti-Christian argument survives in the Cairo Genizah: de Lange, 'A fragment of Byzantine anti-Christian polemic'.

[28] See Fincati, 'Τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν'. Fincati points to a converted Jew, Leo Mungos, who became Bishop of Ohrid in the first half of the twelfth century, but concedes that he cannot

Further light on this question may be shed by the so-called *Graecus Vene-Venetus*, a translation of the Pentateuch with Ruth, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations and Daniel, found in a unique manuscript in Venice, dated to the 14th century, and considered to be, in part, the translator's autograph. The translator makes use of the Septuagint, Akylas, and other Greek versions, and is also guided by the Hebrew.[29] He is also apparently familiar with the Hebrew writings of medieval commentators such as Rashi and David Kimhi.[30] The pages of the manuscript are arranged from right to left, like a Hebrew book. Yet there are also some clearly Christian elements. The translator was a moderately competent Hellenist who affects a complex and sometimes archaic Greek style; the Aramaic portions of the Biblical text are translated into a somewhat artificial form of Doric dialect. The translation thus presents a puzzle: was the translator a Christian or a Jew? No Jew that we know of at this time would have had the requisite knowledge of Greek to make this translation; but why would a Christian make such heavy use of Jewish scholarship, and how would he have access to the Hebrew writings? The modern editor, von Gebhardt, and the Hebrew scholar Franz Delitzsch, who wrote a preface to von Gebhardt's edition, thought the translator was a Jew. Subsequently an Italian scholar, Giovanni Mercati (1866–1957), identified him as a Latin Christian, Simone Atumano, Bishop of Thebes.[31] More recently it has been suggested that Atumano himself was of Jewish origin, which would neatly explain all the elements in the puzzle.[32]

Linguistic study has revealed the presence of a number of Hebrew and Aramaic loanwords in modern Greek and its dialects.[33] The obvious source is the Jewish community, where, as we have seen, a knowledge of these languages was widespread, and influenced the spoken Greek.[34] It is not suggested here that Greek Bible translations played a part in this process, but it does indicate a certain closeness between Jews and Christians in Greek-

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be directly connected to the glosses in MANUSCRIPT 14. See Starr, *The Jews of the Byzantine empire*, 213.

[29] Von Gebhardt, *Graecus Venetus*, considered the work a new translation from the Hebrew, and in this he is followed e.g. by Fernández Marcos, *Introducción*, 185, and Aslanov, 'La place du *Venetus Graecus*'. On the other hand Gil, 'Sobre un curioso pastiche', argues that it is really an archaizing revision of the Septuagint. Dries De Crom takes a similar view, 'The Book of Canticles'.

[30] *Ibid*., 294.

[31] Mercati, 'Chi sia l'autore'; *idem*, *Se la versione*. On Atumano see Fedalto, *Simone Atumano*.

[32] Aslanov, 'La place du *Venetus Graecus*', 156. This view is supported by De Crom, 'The Book of Canticles', 299–301.

[33] Krivoruchko, 'Not only cherubs'.

[34] *Eadem*, 'Λεξικά δάνεια'.

speaking territories. This is a difficult line to pursue historically, however, because of the difficulty of dating the influence.

Concluding reflections

At the conclusion of this investigation I should like to make certain observations that arise from it, mainly from the experience of joining together certain areas of study that are usually taken separately.

In the first place, given the centrality of the Greek language and Greek Bible translations within Judaism in the Roman empire and in the Byzantine empire that succeeded it, I do not see how it is possible to reach any soundly-based understanding of Judaism in the areas in question without a knowledge of Greek. This judgment applies as much to Rabbinic Judaism in Palestine as it does to Rabbanism or Karaism in Byzantium; a knowledge of Hebrew and Aramaic is also essential for all of these. In former times such linguistic knowledge was so widespread among scholars that the principle did not require to be articulated. Today, however, it does need to be firmly enunciated.

Secondly, there is a need for more extensive and deeper study of Byzantine Judaism, both by exponents of Jewish Studies and by Byzantinists. This is a subject that has been unjustly neglected in the past. Byzantium occupied a central place within the medieval Jewish world, and was a meeting-place of different cultures. In particular, it was the gateway through which Palestinian Judaism reached other parts of Europe, notably Ashkenaz, Zarefat (northern France) and Italy, as well as the Slavic lands. As for Byzantinists, who have been slow in general to respond to the challenges and potential value of minority studies, they have tended to ignore the specific impact of Byzantine Jews (as contrasted with ancient Jews) on Christian culture. We have observed some instances of this impact in the particular sphere of biblical studies, but there are other areas, too, that deserve to be explored.

We have noticed some aspects of the complexity of Byzantine Judaism. The Rabbinic movement, for all its strength and intensity, never managed to obliterate traces of older local traditions, and it was also powerless to prevent the introduction and spread of Karaism. (We also hear of some other, smaller sects.) It is important to be sensitive to this complexity, and to the possibility of local variations, and to cultural change over time. At the same time, we have seen that the Greek Bible translations seem to have to have been remarkably widespread in space and persistent in time, and to have transcended sectarian borders.

Finally, there are lessons for biblical studies. I wholeheartedly endorse the approach adopted by Natalio Fernández Marcos in his *Introducción a las versiones griegas de la Biblia*, in which equivalent attention is paid to the

Jewish and Christian traditions. Fernández Marcos understandably concen-concentrates within the Jewish tradition mainly on the earlier period, and devotes only a few pages to the medieval tradition. He himself, however, provides good reasons for exploring the latter further, and integrating it fully within the story of the Greek Bible translations. There are, of course, important differences, which must not be minimised, between the Christian and Jewish traditions in the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, as we have seen, the two traditions did not exist in watertight compartments. It is my hope that in future accounts of the Greek Bible translations the continuity and importance of the Jewish tradition will be recognised.

Appendix 1

The manuscripts

MANUSCRIPT 1
Fragments of 1 and 2 Kings (3 and 4 Reigns) in Greek

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, T-S 12.184 + Cambridge, University Library, T-S 20.50.

Date

6th and 9th/10th century.

Contents

Bottom writing: Parts of 1 Kings 20 and 2 Kings 23 MT (3 Reigns 21 and 4 Reigns 23 LXX), in a translation thought to be that of Akylas. The tetragram is written in Old Hebrew characters, in the form YHYH, except at one point (4 Reigns 23:24) where, at the end of a line, there was no room for the tetragram, and it is replaced by KY, for Κυρίου.

Top writing: Hebrew liturgical poems (*Qerovot* of Yannai). A further leaf of the same codex: Cambridge, University Library, T-S 12.182.

Description

Two fragments from a parchment codex. The original size of each page was 31 cm. high by 23 cm. wide. We have the remains of two bifolios. One is effectively only a folio, as very little remains of the other folio. The other is the central bifolio of a quire.

Palimpsest. Bottom writing: Greek biblical majuscule, with no features to identify it as Jewish rather than Christian. Written in two columns of 23 or 24 lines to the page.

Top writing: Oriental square Hebrew script of Palestinian subtype, of a markedly calligraphic character.

History

The Greek lower text was copied in Egypt, or possibly Palestine or elsewhere in the Middle East, in the 6th century. It was reused as palimpsest in Palestine or Egypt, probably in the 9th or 10th century. Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and taken to Cambridge by Solomon Schechter, 1896–7.

Bibliography

Edition: Charles Taylor, *Hebrew-Greek Cairo Genizah palimpsests from the Taylor-Schechter collection* (Cambridge, 1900).

Michael Sokoloff and Joseph Yahalom, 'Christian palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah', *RHT* 8 (1978): 109–32.

Natalie Tchernetska, 'Greek-Oriental palimpsests in Cambridge: problems and prospects', in C. Holmes and J. Waring (eds), *Literacy, education and manuscript transmission in Byzantium and beyond* (Leiden, 2002): 243–56.

Alfred Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des Alten Testaments, vol. 1: Die Überlieferung bis zum VIII. Jh., bearbeitet von Detlef Fraenkel* (Göttingen, 2004).

Edmon L. Gallagher, 'The religious provenance of the Aquila manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah', *JJS* 64 (2013): 283–305.

Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, 'On the Hebrew script of the Greek-Hebrew palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah', in J. K. Aitken and J. Carleton Paget (eds), *The Jewish Greek tradition in Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2014): 279–99.

MANUSCRIPT 2
Fragments of Psalms in Greek

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, T-S 12.186 + Cambridge, University Library, T-S 12.187 + Cambridge, University Library, T-S 12.188.

Date

6th and 9th century.

Contents

Bottom writing: Fragments of Psalms in Greek, in a translation thought to be that of Akylas. Extant portions: Ps 90(89):17–92(91):10, 96(95):7–12, 98(97):3, 102(101):16–103(102):13.
Top writing: Fragments of Palestinian Talmud, *Ta'anit* and *Mashqin*.

Description

Parchment codex.

Palimpsest. Bottom text: Greek biblical majuscule hand, in 1 column. Small, fluent hand, with letters close to each other, and with horizontal and oblique strokes curved to the left. No accents, punctuation, or contractions. The tetragram is written in Palaeo-Hebrew script.

Top writing: Oriental square Hebrew script of Palestinian subtype.

History

Bottom writing: Greek text written in Egypt or Middle East, 6th century. Reused as palimpsest: probably in Egypt in the 9th or 10th century.

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7.

Bibliography

Edition: Charles Taylor, *Hebrew-Greek Cairo Genizah palimpsests from the Taylor-Schechter collection* (Cambridge, 1900).

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MANUSCRIPT 3
A Hebrew-Greek glossary to Exodus, Isaiah and Jeremiah

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, T-S F17.4.

Date

8th–9th and 9th or early 10th century.

Contents

Bottom writing: Hebrew-Greek glossary of the Bible. The preserved portion of the glossary relates to the Books of Exodus, Isaiah and Jeremiah.

Top writing: Palestinian Talmud, *Sota* 5:9, 22d–23d.

Description

A bifolio from a medium-sized informal codex. Both lower and upper texts cover rectos and versos of the two preserved folios. One folio measures 25.5 x 19.5 cm.. The parchment (probably sheep) is of mediocre quality and bears traces of water-damage, especially in the area of the external margins. There is a clear distinction between hair and flesh sides.

Pricked with a knife or flat sharp instrument. Ruled with a hard point on the flesh side.

Palimpsest. There are up to 40 lines per page. The upper text is copied in dark brown metallo-gallic ink. The lower text, much faded, was probably written using a similar ink.

The Hebrew entries of the bottom writing (bilingual glossary) are written in Hebrew characters, while their Greek translations are in a form of Greek majuscule. The morphology of some of the letters of the upper script has affinities with the Hebrew lower script. However, the lower script is less sharp, the letters are less narrow, and the bases are less slanted. The Greek glosses are written in a majuscule script. The script of the glossary is informal and does not adhere to any majuscule canons.

Top writing: Oriental square Hebrew script of the Palestinian subtype.

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7.

Bibliography

Edition: Natalie Tchernetska, Judith Olszowy-Schlanger and Nicholas de Lange, 'An early Hebrew-Greek biblical glossary from the Cairo Genizah', *REJ* 166 (2007): 91–128.

Louis Ginzberg (ed.), *Yerushalmi fragments from the Genizah*, vol. 1 (New York, 1909).

Michael Sokoloff and Joseph Yahalom, 'Christian palimpsests from the Cairo Genizah', *RHT* 8 (1978): 109–32.

Nicholas de Lange, 'An early Hebrew-Greek Bible glossary from the Cairo Genizah and its significance for the study of Jewish Bible translations into Greek', in M. F. J. Baasten and R. Munk (eds), *Studies in Hebrew literature and culture presented to Albert van der Heide on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday* (Dordrecht, 2007): 31–9.

Nicholas de Lange and Natalie Tchernetska, 'Glosses in Greek script and language in medieval Hebrew manuscripts', *Scriptorium* 68 (2014): 253–64.

MANUSCRIPT 4
Fragment of the book of Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) in Greek

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, T-S Misc. 28.74.

Date

11th century or earlier.

Contents

Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 2:13–23 in Greek, each verse preceded by the opening word or words in Hebrew.

Description

A single leaf of parchment, substantially intact but damaged along two edges; a little of the text has been lost. Overall dimensions: height 11.5 cm., width 22 cm.. There is no indication that the leaf was bound in a codex: some sort of loose leaf arrangement should be envisaged. There is a small hole in the middle: the leaves were perhaps assembled on a spike or a string. There are traces of a central vertical fold.

Byzantine square Hebrew characters. The written space measures 7.5 cm. in height, and the lines are of variable length, 8–9 cm., 10 lines per column, 2 columns each side.

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7.

Bibliography

Transcription in Greek characters: D. S. Blondheim, 'Échos du judéo-hellénisme: étude sur l'influence de la Septante et d'Aquila sur les versions néo-grecques des Juifs', *REJ* 78 (1924): 1–14, reprinted in *idem*, *Les parlers judéo-romans et la Vetus Latina* (Paris, 1925): 157–70.

Edition: Nicholas de Lange, 'Two Genizah fragments in Hebrew and Greek', in J. A. Emerton and S. C. Reif (eds), *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: essays in honour of E. I. J. Rosenthal* (Cambridge, 1982): 75–83.

Revised edition: Nicholas de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Tübingen, 1996): 71–8.

Joannes Niehoff-Panagiotides, ‘Rabbinische Lebenswelt und rabbinische Hermeneutik: die griechischen Juden in der Kairoer Genizah’, *Byzantion* 74 (2004): 51–109.

MANUSCRIPT 5
A biblical glossary

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, T-S NS 309.9.

Date

10th–11th century.

Contents

Part of a bilingual glossary, the extant portions covering parts of Zechariah, Malachi and Job.

Description

Two leaves of parchment conjoined; badly mutilated and rubbed. The outer side (fols 1 recto and 2 verso) is particularly poorly preserved, and relatively little of the text here is legible. Traces of pricking and scored lines. Overall dimensions: height 8.2 cm., width 16.8 cm.. Written space: Height 6.2–7 cm., width (on each page, to the colon at the left) 6.5 cm..

Written in two columns, Hebrew to left, Greek to right. Some words written vertically. Square Hebrew characters, partially pointed (both Hebrew and Greek words).

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7.

Bibliography

Edition: Nicholas de Lange, 'Some new fragments of Aquila on Malachi and Job?', *Vetus Testamentum* 30 (1980): 291–4.

Revised edition: Nicholas de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts from the Cairo Geniza* (Tübingen, 1996): 79–84.

J. Ziegler, *Job* (Göttingen, 1982), 160.

MANUSCRIPT 6
Glosses on 1 Kings

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, T-S K24.14.

Date

11th–12th century.

Contents

Brief philological notes on the First Book of Kings, extending from 1 Kings 6:20 to 8:37, and including many Greek glosses.

Description

Two leaves of parchment conjoined and continuous; rubbed and stained with some small holes, but the text is virtually intact. Pricked and ruled with a dry point across the sheet. Overall dimensions: Height 13.2 cm., width 25 cm.. Written space: 9.5 x 9 cm..

Brown ink. Irregular square Hebrew characters. Pointed throughout, with some exceptions in both Hebrew and Greek. There is extensive use of the *dagesh* and *rafe*. Short lines are filled with a row of dots, and Greek words are sometimes broken at a line-division, but some lines extend far into the left margin.

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7.

Bibliography

Edition: Nicholas de Lange, 'Two Genizah fragments in Hebrew and Greek', in J. A. Emerton and S. C. Reif (eds), *Interpreting the Hebrew Bible: essays in honour of E. I. J. Rosenthal* (Cambridge, 1982): 75–83.

Revised edition: Nicholas de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Tübingen, 1996): 155–63.

Peter Mackridge, Review of de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts*, *BJGS* 19 (Winter 1996): 21–4.

Israel M. Ta-Shma, 'Byzantine Bible commentary from the turn of the 10th–11th century' (in Hebrew), in *idem*, *Studies in medieval rabbinic literature 3: Italy and Byzantium* (Jerusalem, 2005): 241–58.

T. M. Law, 'The use of the Greek Bible in some Byzantine Jewish glosses on Solomon's building campaign', in N. de Lange, J. G. Krivoruchko and C. Boyd-Taylor (eds), *Jewish reception of Greek Bible versions: studies in their use in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Tübingen, 2009): 263–83.

MANUSCRIPT 7
Scholia on Genesis and Exodus

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, T-S C6.117 + Oxford, Bodleian Library and Cambridge, University Library, Lewis-Gibson Talmud 1.110 (formerly Cambridge, Westminster College, Talmudica I.110).

Date

11th–12th century.

Contents

A sequence of mainly unconnected philological and exegetical notes on the first two books of the Torah, grouped according to the liturgical readings (*sidrot*).

Description

Eight leaves of parchment, together constituting an almost complete quire.

T-S C6.117 (leaves 1 and 8): Two leaves of parchment, conjoined. Badly mutilated and stained. Large parts of the text are missing. Dimensions overall: Height 11.8 cm., width of sheet 26.4 cm.. Written space approximately 8 x 9 cm. Pricked and scored.

Lewis-Gibson Talmud 1.110 (leaves 2 to 7): Six leaves of parchment, conjoined in pairs. Badly stained and mutilated in places, but very little text is lost. Dimensions overall: 11.3–12.9 cm. x 24.3–26.3 cm. Written space: 7.8–8.8 x 8.8–9.9 cm.. Pricked and scored. The leaves have been numbered twice in Arabic numerals, from 12–17 (in bottom right-hand corner) and from 7–12 (at the top, generally at the left).

Small, fairly neat Hebrew hand. Pointing is used occasionally and not systematically: it is used for Greek words (though not always); for Hebrew words to resolve ambiguity. There is a heavy use of ligatures; abbreviation is common, and indicated by a point above the last letter. *Adonai* is a triangular arrangement of three *yod*s followed by an oblique stroke. Punctuation: For a minor break a superior dot; for a major break two dots, followed by an oblique zig-zag and a space at the end of a *sidra*, which is also marked by the letters סד in the right margin. The end of a book is marked by ספר in the right margin. There are little rings above certain letters and in the margin, and in one passage (fol. 5r) פ is several times written above the name of Moses. In addition to the Greek glosses in Hebrew characters which form part of the

text, there are some interlinear glosses in Greek in Hebrew characters, and also some in Greek characters. These are written in a modified uncial hand which is found in several other Cairo Genizah fragments.

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7.

Bibliography

Edition: Nicholas de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Tübingen, 1996): 85–116.

Israel M. Ta-Shma, 'Byzantine Bible commentary from the turn of the 10th–11th century' (in Hebrew), in *idem*, *Studies in medieval rabbinic literature: Italy and Byzantium*, 3 (Jerusalem, 2005): 241–58.

Richard C. Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries from the Genizah: Rabbanite vs. Karaite', in M. Bar-Asher et al. (eds), *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, its exegesis and its language* (Jerusalem, 2007): 243–62.

Gershon Brin, *Reuel and his friends: Jewish Byzantine exegetes from around the tenth century C.E.* (in Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 2012).

Nicholas de Lange and Natalie Tchernetska, 'Glosses in Greek script and language in medieval Hebrew manuscripts', *Scriptorium* 68 (2014): 253–64.

MANUSCRIPT 8
Scholia on Genesis and Joshua

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, C6.133 (part).

Date

11th–12th century.

Contents

Scholia on Genesis and Joshua, extremely fragmentary in parts. Mainly brief notes, but including a more detailed commentary on the division of the land in Joshua chapter 13, which bears the heading, 'Chapter of the Allocation of the Territories' (נחלות פרק).

Description

Two leaves of parchment, conjoined. Badly mutilated and stained, resulting in the loss of much of the text. Overall dimension of surviving parchment: Height 13 cm., width of better preserved leaf 12 cm.; written space: 11.2 cm. x 9.8 cm. (between bounding lines). Pricked in the outer margin and ruled with a hard point across the entire sheet.

Brown ink. Hebrew characters. Rather untidy hand. On 2v the writing is smaller and the written lines are closer together, ignoring the rulings. Deletion is marked by crossing out (2v 15); missing letters are inserted above the line (2v 4, 12). Pointing is used rarely and inconsistently, for Greek and Hebrew words. Punctuation is light; it is marked by a colon (in Genesis), colon + oblique (in Joshua). New sections are indicated by a blank space, either at the beginning of a line or within the line. Abbreviations are marked by a dot over the last letter; ligatures are conventional and relatively scarce. Divine name: For biblical tetragram, three yods arranged as a triangle; the author himself uses the title Shaddai (2r 8, 2v 25). There is some attempt at achieving a justified left margin by the use of stretched letters, but the results are uneven and words are often allowed to overrun. At one point a line may be filled with the beginning of the next word (1v 11).

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7.

Bibliography

Edition: Nicholas de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Tübingen, 1996): 117–25.

Richard C. Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries from the Genizah: Rabbanite vs. Karaite', in M. Bar-Asher et al. (eds), *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, its exegesis and its language* (Jerusalem, 2007): 243–62.

MANUSCRIPT 9
A commentary on Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets

Classmark

Jerusalem, NLI Heb. 4o 577.7/1 + Cambridge, University Library, T-S C2.87 + Cambridge, University Library, T-S F2(1).211 + T-S 32.1 + Cambridge, University Library, T-S K27.46 + Cambridge, University Library, T-S K25.288 + Cambridge, University Library, T-S K27.47.

Date

Ca 10th–11th century.

Contents

Fragments of commentaries on Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets written mainly in Hebrew, with many Greek words and phrases, which are employed sometimes to translate the Hebrew of the biblical text, and sometimes to clarify some explanatory point. The author's name appears to be Reuel. Many sections of text are lacking.

Description

Written on two rotuli (scrolls written vertically, made up of strips of parchment sewn together). One was about 3 metres long, the other much shorter. Width: 10.7–12.3 cm.. Written on both sides. Partly ruled using a dry point.

Brown ink. Square Hebrew script. Greek words usually pointed. Very unevenly written.

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt. Cambridge fragments taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7. Jerusalem fragment acquired by David Kaufmann (1852–99), and later deposited in the library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (mentioned in Löwinger and Scheiber, XII). Stolen from the Academy library and acquired by the NLI.

Bibliography

Edition: Nicholas de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Tübingen,1996): 165–294.

S. Löwinger and A. Scheiber, *Genizah publications in memory of Prof. Dr. David Kaufmann* (Budapest, 1949).

Peter Mackridge, Review of de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts*, *BJGS* 19 (Winter 1996): 21–4.

Cyril Aslanov, 'Les gloses judéo-helléniques du "Commentaire de Re'uel sur Ezéchiel" découvert à la Geniza du Caire', *REJ* 157 (1998): 7–45.

Richard C. Steiner, 'Textual and exegetical notes to Nicholas de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts from the Cairo Genizah*', *JQR* 89 (1998): 155–69.

Johannes Niehoff-Panagiotidis, Review of de Lange, *Greek Jewish Texts*, *Südost-Forschungen* 58 (1999): 474–80.

Johannes Niehoff-Panagiotides, 'Rabbinische Lebenswelt und rabbinische Hermeneutik: die griechischen Juden in der Kairoer Genizah', *Byzantion* 74 (2004): 51–109.

Israel M. Ta-Shma, 'Byzantine Bible commentary from the turn of the 10th–11th century' (in Hebrew), in *idem*, *Studies in medieval rabbinic literature 3: Italy and Byzantium* (Jerusalem, 2005): 241–58.

Richard C. Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries from the Genizah: Rabbanite vs. Karaite', in M. Bar-Asher et al., *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, its exegesis and its language* (Jerusalem, 2007): 243–62.

Gershon Brin, *Reuel and his friends: Jewish Byzantine exegetes from around the tenth century C.E.* (in Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 2012).

Avraham Grossman, 'The impact of Rabbi Samuel of Spain and Reuel of Byzantium on Rashi's school' (in Hebrew), *Tarbiz* 82 (AM 5774): 447–67.

MANUSCRIPT 10
Commentary on 1 Kings

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, T-S C6.133 (part) + Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Heb.d.43, fol.25–6.

Date

11th–12th century.

Contents

Part of a commentary on the First Book of Kings, in Hebrew with some Greek glosses, attributed to Tobias b. Moses (Steiner). The surviving text extends from 1 Kings 7:25 to 10:21. The work is apparently a compendium from various sources, not always coherently woven together. Greek glosses are used very occasionally.

Description

Eight leaves (four sheets) of parchment from the same quire, giving a continuous text. (It is possible that a fifth sheet originally completed the quire on the outside.) There are holes from the stitching. Traces of pricking can be seen on the outer edge of fols 4, 5 and 7, and the parchment is ruled with a hard point across the sheet.

T-S C6.133 (part) (folios 1, 3–6, 8): Six leaves of parchment, conjoined in pairs. Generally well preserved, but mutilated in places, and particularly at the top of each sheet, round the central fold. Several lines are missing at the top of fol. 1; otherwise the text is essentially intact. Dimensions overall: 16.8–18.2 x 23.5–30 cm.. The width of each leaf from the central fold to the edge is ±15 cm., with the exception of fol. 1, which is exceptionally narrow, only 9 cm.. Written space: 11.7–13.2 cm. x 9.5–10.5 cm. (between vertical rulings), except for fol. 1: 5–5.5 cm..

Heb.d.43, fol. 25–6 (folios 2 and 7): Two leaves of parchment, conjoined. Stained and extensively mutilated at the top centre, but the text is virtually intact and generally well preserved. Dimensions overall: 18.4 x 29.5 cm.. Written space: 14.7 x 10.2 cm. (between vertical rulings), except for fol. 1: 5–5.5 cm..

Brown ink. The writing is generally careful, if uneven, and somewhat ornamental. Pointing is used occasionally, for Greek and Hebrew words. Ligatures are rare. Abbreviations are mainly conventional, and marked by

dots or curved lines over the letters, or by a broken letter. Deletions are marked by crossing out or overlining. (The text has evidently been copied from another written text.) *Adonai* is represented by two yods with a curved line over; *Elohim* by אלים. Punctuation: A single point on the upper line. On fol. 4r there is an illustration of the two columns of 1 Kings 7:21; it is a vignette, bearing no direct relation to the adjacent text (which is the end of chapter 7), and is accompanied by captions. There is some attempt to achieve a straight left margin, by the use of stretched letters and sometimes by compressing words or by using the beginning of a word as a filler, but the result is not very successful, and many lines run over the ruled margin.

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt. Cambridge fragment taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7. Oxford fragment acquired by the Bodleian Library.

Bibliography

Edition: Nicholas de Lange, *Greek Jewish texts from the Cairo Genizah* (Tübingen, 1996): 127–53.

Richard C. Steiner, 'The Byzantine biblical commentaries from the Genizah: Rabbanite vs. Karaite', in M. Bar-Asher et al. (eds), *Shai le-Sara Japhet: Studies in the Bible, its exegesis and its language* (Jerusalem, 2007): 243–62.

Gershon Brin, *Reuel and his friends: Jewish Byzantine exegetes from around the tenth century C.E.* (in Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 2012).

MANUSCRIPT 11
Fragment of Proverbs in Hebrew with Greek glosses

Classmark

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Heb.e.43, fol. 51.

Date

11th–13th century.

Contents

Hebrew text of Proverbs 17:16–19:3 with four Greek interlinear glosses in Greek characters.

Description

A leaf of parchment, 20 x 15.5 cm..

Hebrew text written in square Hebrew script in 2 columns. Greek glosses written in a modified Greek uncial script.

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and acquired by the Bodelian Library, Oxford.

Bibliography

H. P. Rüger, 'Vier Aquila-Glossen in einem hebräischen Proverbien-Fragment aus der Kairo-Genizah', *ZNW* 50 (1959): 275–7.

Nicholas de Lange and Natalie Tchernetska, 'Glosses in Greek script and language in medieval Hebrew manuscripts', *Scriptorium* 68 (2014): 253–64.

MANUSCRIPT 12
Fragment of Judges in Hebrew with Greek glosses

Classmark

Cambridge, University Library, T-S NS 250.7–8.

Date

11th–13th century.

Contents

Judges 8:12–11:18 in Hebrew with Tiberian vocalisation, cantillation and *masora parva*, and two Greek glosses in modified Greek uncial characters.

Description

Three consecutive parchment leaves and a stub. Pricked with a knife and ruled with a dry point.

Text written in double columns, in black ink; vocalisation and glosses in brown ink.

History

Found in the genizah of the Ben Ezra Synagogue, Fostat, Egypt, and taken to Cambridge by S. Schechter, 1896–7.

Bibliography

M. C. Davis, *Hebrew Bible manuscripts in the Cambridge Genizah collections*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1980): 267 and Plate 9.

Nicholas de Lange and Natalie Tchernetska, 'Glosses in Greek script and language in medieval Hebrew manuscripts', *Scriptorium* 68 (2014): 253–64.

MANUSCRIPT 13
Hebrew Former Prophets with Greek glosses

Classmark

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, Ms 364*.

Date

11th–12th century.

Contents

Incomplete Hebrew text of Former Prophets from Joshua 3:10 to 2 Kings 25:15, pointed, with cantillation signs, and with *masora magna* and *parva*, Hebrew notes and Greek glosses in the margins.

Description

Incomplete codex of mediocre quality parchment, blackened at the edges and badly damaged, especially at the beginning and end. 174 fols, 23 x 18.5 cm.. Quaternions. Ruled with a hard point on the recto. Few signs of pricking.

Thick black ink, fading to dark brown, used for consonants and vowels. Some other inks used for parts of text and some annotations. Main text: Calligraphic square Hebrew hand, written by four or more scribes. *Masora*: Two cursive hands. Marginal annotations: Four cursive hands, one very similar to one of the hands of the *masora*. Two columns per page. 21–26 lines. Despite attempts to keep the left margin straight by means of graphic devices the lines are of irregular length. Several different scribes wrote the text, the *masora* and the annotations.

History

Sold in Kislev AM 5237 (November/December 1476) by Shabbetai son of El[. . .]. Bought in Canea (Crete) by Abraham son of Na'aman and dedicated in a synagogue in Egripon (Negroponte, Euboea) in AM 5403 (1642/3). Subsequent history unknown. Bequeathed to the Fitzwilliam Museum by J. S. Henderson in 1933.

Bibliography

Nicholas de Lange, 'The Greek Glosses of the Fitzwilliam Museum Bible (Ms 364*)', in S. Berger, M. Brocke and I. Zwiep (eds), *Zutot 2002* (Dordrecht, 2003): 138–47.

Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, 'An early Hebrew manuscript from Byzantium', in S. Berger, M. Brocke and I. Zwiep (eds), *Zutot 2002* (Dordrecht, 2003): 148–55.

Shifra Sznol, 'The Greek glosses of Fitzwilliam Museum MS 364*: some notes', *BJGS* 40 (2007), 32–5.

Cameron Boyd-Taylor, 'Echoes of the Septuagint in Byzantine Judaism' in W. Kraus, M. Karrer and M. Meiser (eds), *Die Septuaginta – Texte, Theologien, Einflüsse: 2. Internationale Fachtagung veranstaltet von Septuaginta Deutsch (LXX.D), Wuppertal 23.-27. Juli 2008* (Tübingen, 2010): 188–204.

MANUSCRIPT 14
Greek Hexateuch with marginal annotations

Classmark

Milan, Ambrosian Library, A 147 inf. (Martini-Bassi 808) (F in the classification of Septuagint manuscripts).

Date

Early 5th century. Substantially restored and annotated in the 11th century.

Contents

Greek Hexateuch, incomplete (Gen 31:15–Josh 12:12, with gaps), with many marginal annotations.

Description

Codex of fine white parchment, 213 fols, 32.5 x 27.3 cm.. Quaternions.

Pale reddish ink. Carefully written Greek biblical majuscule script. 3 columns, 35 lines. Few abbreviations apart from *nomina sacra*. Later annotations in majuscule. 11th-century annotations in cursive Greek hand.

Description in Ceriani (1864) and Fincati (2009).

History

Probably written in Egypt. ('Probably of Italian origin', Wevers.) Thoroughly restored at the end of the 11th century. Underwent several revisions in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. Taken from Macedonia to Corfu, where it was acquired for Cardinal Federigo Borromeo (1564–1631), the founder of the Ambrosian Library. Restored in Modena, 1955.

Bibliography

A. M. Ceriani, *Monumenta sacra et profana 3* (Milan, 1864).

Henry Barclay Swete, *An introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge, 1900): 135–6.

Alfred Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des Alten Testaments (*Berlin 1914): 125.

John William Wevers, 'A secondary text in Codex Ambrosianus of the Greek Exodus', in R. Gryson (ed.), *Philologia Sacra: biblische und patristische Studien für Hermann J. Frede und Walter Thiele zu ihrem siebstigsten Geburtstag* (Freiburg, 1993): 36–48.

Natalio Fernández Marcos, *Introducción a las versiones griegas de la Biblia*, (Madrid, second edition 1998): 182–92.

Cameron Boyd-Taylor, 'The Greek Bible amongst Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages: the evidence of Codex Ambrosianus', in M. K. H. Peters (ed.), *XIII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Ljubljana 2007* (Atlanta, GA, 2008): 29–39.

Mariachiara Fincati, 'Il restauro medievale dell' Esateuco ambrosiano A 147 inf.' (Master's dissertation, Milan, 2008).

Alison Salvesen, 'The relationship of LXX and the Three in Exodus 1–24 to the readings of Fb', in N. de Lange, J. Krivoruchko and C. Boyd-Taylor (eds), *Jewish reception of Greek Bible versions: studies in their use in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Tübingen, 2009): 103–27.

Mariachiara Fincati, 'Per la storia dell'esateuco ambrosiano A 147 inf.', *Aevum* 83 (2009): 299–339.

Mariachiara Fincati, 'Some remarks on the Codex Ambrosianus', in M. K. H. Peters (ed.), *XIV Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* (Helsinki, 2010): 425–34.

Mariachiara Fincati, '*Septuaginta*, *Hebraica Veritas* e *iudicium*: la revisione medievale dell'Esateuco Ambrosiano A 147 inf.' (PhD Dissertation, Florence, 2012).

Mariachiara Fincati, 'Τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν: Greek Bible and *Hebraica Veritas* among Byzantine Christians and Jews', in B. Crostini and S. La Porta (eds), *Negotiating co-existence: communities, cultures and* convivencia *in Byzantine society* (Trier, 2013): 89–101.

Cameron Boyd-Taylor, 'The τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν glosses: lost Jewish version or red-herring?', in J. K. Aitken and T. V. Evans (eds), *Biblical Greek in context: essays in honour of John A. L. Lee* (Leuven, forthcoming 2015).

MANUSCRIPT 15
Greek Octateuch with marginal annotations

Classmark

Paris, BnF Coislinianus gr. 1.

Date

Text: 7th century. Annotations: 7th century, 9th century and later.

Contents

Greek Octateuch.

Description

Parchment codex, incomplete. 227 folios, 33 x 23 cm..
49 or 50 lines

History

Purchased in Turkey in the mid-17th century for Pierre Séguier, Chancellor of France (1588–1672). Bequeathed by his great-grandson, Henri-Charles de Cambout, duc de Coislin and Bishop of Metz, to the abbey of Saint Germain des Prés. From there it passed to the Royal Library and ultimately to the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Bibliography

Henry Barclay Swete, *An introduction to the Old Testament in Greek* (Cambridge, 1900): 140.

Alfred Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des Alten Testaments (*Berlin 1914): 183–4.

Natalio Fernández Marcos, *Introducción a las versiones griegas de la Biblia* (Madrid, second edition 1998): 182–92.

MANUSCRIPT 16
Greek biblical manuscript

Classmark

Paris, BnF, Reg. gr. 3 (56 in the Göttingen edition of the Greek Bible).

Date

1093.

Contents

Greek Octateuch, 3 and 4 Reigns, Paralipomena, Maccabees (with some gaps), with annotations.

Description

Codex of white parchment, 360 fols, written full page in a thickly-traced *Perlschrift.*

History

Copied in southern Italy. Belonged to Nikolaos-Nektarios of Otranto/Casole (1155/60–1235); the MS bears annotations by him or one of his associates.

Bibliography

Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta-Studien* 3 (1911): 35–42.
Alfred Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des Alten Testaments* (Berlin 1914): 192.
Natalio Fernández Marcos, *Introducción a las versiones griegas de la Biblia* (Madrid, second edition 1998): 182–92.
Mariachiara Fincati, 'Τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν: Greek Bible and *Hebraica Veritas* among Byzantine Christians and Jews', in B. Crostini and S. La Porta (eds), *Negotiating co-existence: communities, cultures and* convivencia *in Byzantine society* (Trier, 2013): 89–101.
Cameron Boyd-Taylor, 'The τὸ ἰουδαϊκόν glosses: Lost Jewish version or red-herring?', in J. K. Aitken and T. V. Evans (eds), *Biblical Greek in context: essays in honour of John A. L. Lee* (Leuven, forthcoming 2015).

MANUSCRIPT 17
Festival prayers (Romaniote rite), with Jonah in Greek

Classmark

Oxford, Bodleian Library, Opp. Add. 8vo 19 (Neubauer 1144).

Date

14th century?

Contents

Festival prayers according to the Romaniote rite. Fol. 220r to 227v: Jonah in Greek, beginning with the first verse in Hebrew, many subsequent verses preceded by the opening words in Hebrew.

Description

Parchment codex, 14 x 11 cm.. 345 folios.
Byzantine square and semi-cursive Hebrew characters. Pointed. 13 lines. Despite graphic devices aimed at achieving a straight left margin, the lines are of uneven length.

History

Sold by the widow of Zechariah ha-Kohen on 29 August 1514.

Bibliography

Edition of Jonah: D. C. Hesseling, 'Le livre de Jonas', *BZ* 10 (1901), 208–17.

A. Neubauer, *Catalogue of the Hebrew manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1886): no. 1144, cols 333–4.

Beit-Arié, M., and R. A. May (eds), *Catalogue of the Hebrew manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, supplement of addenda and corrigenda to vol. I (Neubauer's Catalogue)* (Oxford, 1994), col. 182.

MANUSCRIPT 18
Festival prayers (Romaniote rite), with Jonah in Greek.

Classmark

Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, Ms 3574A (Modona 12).

Date

15th century.

Contents

Prayers for Feast of Weeks, New Year, Fast of Gedaliah and Day of Atonement according the Romaniote rite. Fol. 249v to 252r: Greek translation of Jonah, first three verses in Hebrew followed by their translation in Greek, then each verse in Hebrew followed by the translation of that verse.

Description

Parchment codex, 278 folios, 27.5 x 21 cm..
Byzantine square Hebrew script.

History

Written in Crete, probably in Candia.

Bibliography

Edition of Jonah: D. C. Hesseling, 'Le livre de Jonas', *BZ* 10 (1901), 208–17.

Leonello Modona, *Catalogo dei codici ebraici della Biblioteca della R. Università di Bologna* (Florence, 1889): 13–18.

Mauro Perani and Giacomo Corazzol, 'Nuovo catalogo dei manoscritti ebraici della Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna', *InBUB* 3 (2013): [13–191], 83–91 (with bibliography).

MANUSCRIPT 19
A Glossary to the Prophets

Classmark

St Petersburg, National Library of Russia, Evr. IIA 1980.

Date

14th century.

Contents

Hebrew-Greek glossary of the Prophets, the extant portions extending from Judges 7:3 to Jeremiah 16:16, with many further glosses written in the margins.

Description

Incomplete paper codex, 33 folios, 14 x 10.5 cm.. Watermark: 'Big jar with one handle of the simplest form' (handlist). Briquet 12464–12471 (Krivoruchko).

History

Acquired by Abraham Firkovich (1786–1874), possibly from the Cairo Genizah, or perhaps in Istanbul. Bought by the Imperial Library in 1862–3.

Bibliography

Julia Krivoruchko, 'A Fourteenth-Century Karaite (?) Judaeo-Greek Glossary on the Prophets: Seventy Faces of Torah' (in Hebrew), *Carmilim* 10 (2014): 79–90.

Julia Krivoruchko, *The late Byzantine Hebrew-Greek glossary to the Prophets* (Leiden, forthcoming).

Appendix 2

Later translations

The period covered by this book ends around 1500 with the arrival of large numbers of Sephardi Jews and the introduction of Hebrew printing. There are some later witnesses to the tradition of Greek translation, and those known to me are listed here, with bibliographical information, in approximate chronological order.

Greek translation of Job by Moses Fobian or Fabian, printed in Constantinople in 5336/1576.

Lazare Belléli, 'Deux versions peu connues du Pentateuque', *REJ* 1891: [250–63], 251.
Adolf Neubauer, 'On non-Hebrew languages used by the Jews', *JQR* 4 (1891–2): 9–19.
A. Yaari, *Hebrew printing at Constantinople* (in Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1967): no. 189.

The publication is very rare, and very few of those authors who mention it have seen a copy. (I have not seen it myself.) There was a copy in the library of the Paris Oratoire, mentioned by Jacques Le Long, *Bibliotheca Sacra* (Paris, 1723): 176, and Moritz Steinschneider *JQR* 16 (1903–4), 736.

Greek translation of the Aramaic portions of the Bible by Elijah Afeda Beghi, entitled Me'irat 'eynayim, together with a glossary to the entire Bible, completed in 1627.

The translation was published by Abraham Danon, 'Meïrath 'Enaïm, version en néogrec et en caractères hébraïques de Jérémie X, 11, de Daniel II, 5–VII, 28 et d'Esdras IV,7–VI, 26', *Journal Asiatique*, 11e série, 4 (1914): 5–65.
On the author, see Mordecai L. Wilensky, 'Rabbi Elijah Afeda Baghi and the Karaite community of Jerusalem', *PAAJR* 40 (1972): 109–46.

Short commentary on Psalms, Lamentations and Ecclesiastes, including Greek glosses. Incomplete. 16 fols remaining. (Jerusalem NLI, Ms Heb. 8^{o} 2332)

Brief description with extracts in Daniel Goldschmidt, 'Greek Bible translations by 17th-century Jews' (in Hebrew), *Kiryat Sefer* 33 (1957/8): 131–4.
Photograph in Moshe Altbauer and Yaakob Shibi, 'A Judaeo-Greek glossary to the Five Scrolls' (in Hebrew), *Sefunot* 15 (1971–81): [369–421], 378.

Greek glosses on Isaiah and Jeremiah AM 5588 (1827/8), written by Hayyim Eliasaf Battino. 37 pp. (New York, Columbia University X 893 1 BC P433)

Glossary to the Bible, written by Mordecai Yosef Habdala in 1839. (New York, JTS MS Micr. 5321/1, Acc. 01234)

Description and study, with transcription of glosses on Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, in Moshe Altbauer and Yaakob Shibi, 'A Judaeo-Greek glossary to the Five Scrolls' (in Hebrew), *Sefunot* 15 (1971–81): 369–421.

Description in Aharon Maman, *Otsrot Lashon: The Hebrew philology manuscripts and Geniza fragments in the Library of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America* (in Hebrew) (Jerusalem, New York, 2006): 3012–13.

Shifra Sznol, 'Text and glossary: between written text and oral tradition', in T. M. Law and A. Salvesen, *Greek Scripture and the Rabbis* (Leuven, 2012): [217–32], 227–32.

Glossary to the Bible. Written by Joseph Joshua Zachar (זכאר) *in 1843. 147 fols. (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek (Preussischer Kulturbesitz), Ms Or 4^{o} 758)*

Moritz Steinschneider, *Verzeichniss der hebräischen Handschriften* (Berlin, 1897): no. 147.

David S. Blondheim, 'Échos du judéo-hellénisme (étude sur l'influence de la Septante et d'Akylas sur les versions néo-grecques des Juifs)', *REJ* 78 (1924): [1–14], 6.

Moshe Altbauer and Yaakob Shibi, 'A Judaeo-Greek glossary to the Five Scrolls' (in Hebrew), *Sefunot* 15 (1971–81): [369–421], 370.

Greek glosses on Song of Songs and Job, written by Hayyim Elia Attias in 1843. 17 pp. (New York, Columbia University X893 1 BE P433)

Greek glosses to Psalms, written 1848/9. 26 pp. (New York, Columbia University X893 1 BQ J4)

Song of Songs in Greek, written 1851/2. (New York, Columbia University X893 P433/3, fol. 146v-147r)

Glossary to Jeremiah and Psalms 1–10, written by Moses Solomon Moses, 1860 or 1865 (Jerusalem, Ben Zvi Institute, ms 3513)

According to the title page the author came from Ioannina, and taught Hebrew in Larisa, Volos, Chalkis and Salonica, where he is buried.

Glosses on Psalms, Mi Kamokha of Judah ha-Levi, Esther, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, both Azharot of Solomon Ibn Gabirol, glosses to Chronicles. Written by Shabbetai Yeuda Galano, 1871/2. 130 ff. (New York, Columbia University X893 1P53)

Glosses on Psalms, written by David Yesuleh. No date. 32ff. (New York, Columbia University, X893 1 BQ J2)

Glossary to Job, written by Moses Solomon Moses [of Ioannina]. No date. (Jerusalem, Ben Zvi Institute, ms 3502)

Translation of haftarot. (Jerusalem, Ben Zvi Institute, ms 3519)

Shifra Sznol, 'Haphtara Nahamu (Isaiah 40, 1–26) in Judaeo-Greek translation' (in Hebrew), *Beit Mikra* 151 (1997): 332–42.

Julia Krivoruchko, 'Τα Ελληνικά χειρόγραφα σε Εβραϊκή γραφή: Η προσέλευση και τα κύρια χαρακτηριστικά της γλώσσας τους', in A. Argyriou, K. A. Dimadis and A. D. Lazaridou (eds), *Ο ελληνικός κόσμος ανάμεσα στην Ανατολή και τη Δύση 1453-1981 (Πρακτικά του Α' Ευρωπαϊκού Συνεδρίου Νεολληνικών Σπουδών· Βερολίνο· 2-4 Οκτωβρίου 1998)*· Τομος Α' (Athens, 1999): 647–60.

Shifra Sznol, 'A Judaeo-Greek translation of the *haftara* of *Vaethanan* for the Sabbath of Consolation (Isaiah 40, 1–26)' (in Hebrew), *Textus* 20 (5761/2000): 9–32.

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